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University History Series

Michael J. Koll

THE LAIR OF THE BEAR AND THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, 1949-1993

With an Introduction by
David B. Flinn

Includes Interviews with
Bob Albo, Noel Helmbrecht, Jane Biedenbach Koll,
Loretta Koll, Lynne Koll Martin, and Janor Kingwell Tuck

Interviews Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1991-1993

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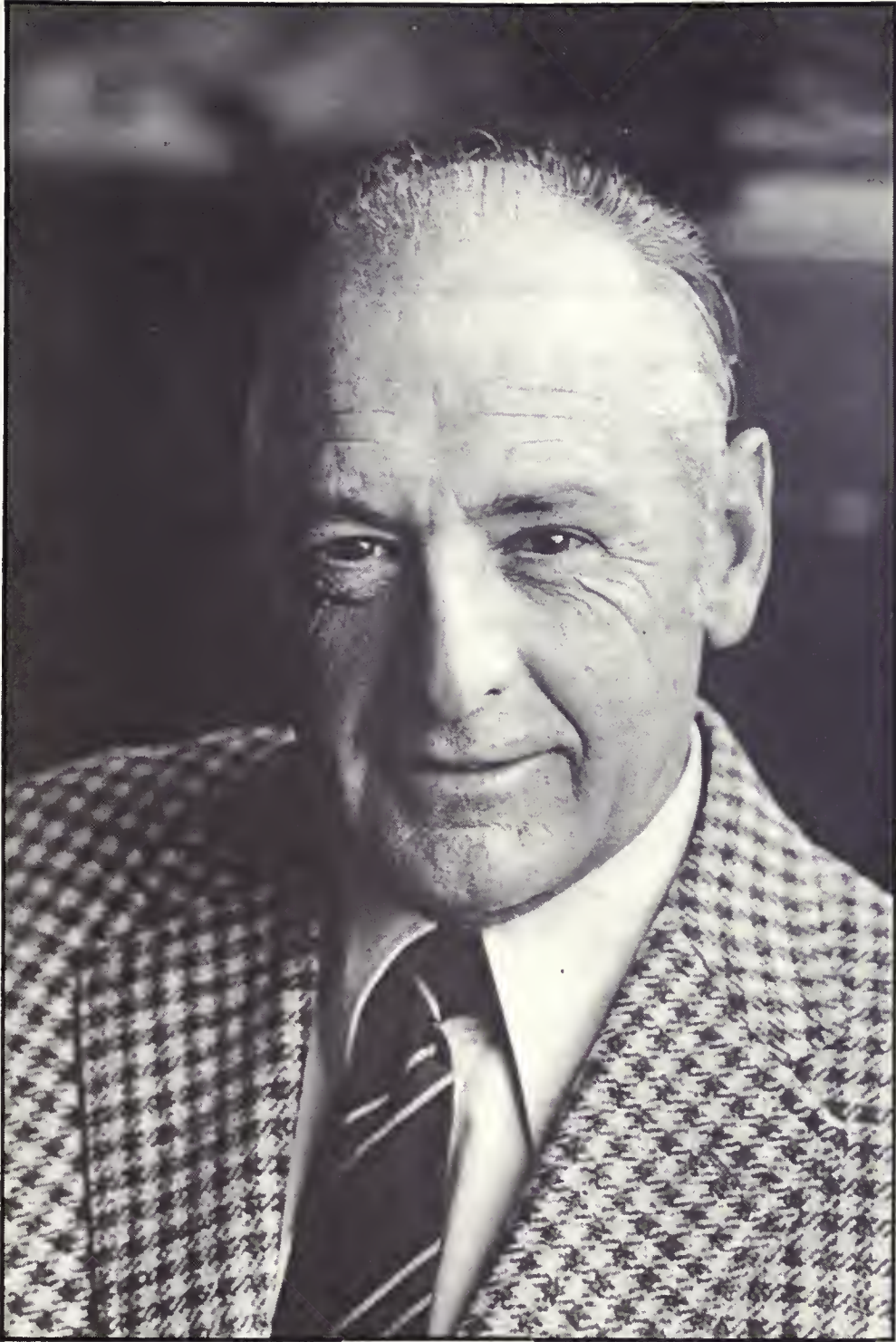
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Alumni Association administrator

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PREFACE

When President Robert Gordon Sproul proposed that the Regents of the University of California establish a Regional Oral History Office, he was eager to have the office document both the University's history and its impact on the state. The Regents established the office in 1954, "to tape record the memoirs of persons who have contributed significantly to the history of California and the West," thus embracing President Sproul's vision and expanding its scope.

Administratively, the new program at Berkeley was placed within the library, but the budget line was direct to the Office of the President. An Academic Senate committee served as executive. In the more than three decades that followed, the program has grown in scope and personnel, and has taken its place as a division of The Bancroft Library, the University's manuscript and rare books Library. The essential purpose of the office, however, remains as it was in the beginning: to document the movers and shakers of California and the West, and to give special attention to those who have strong and often continuing links to the University of California.

The Regional Oral History Office at Berkeley is the oldest such entity within the University system, and the University History series is the Regional Oral History Office's longest established series of memoirs. That series documents the institutional history of the University. It captures the flavor of incidents, events, personalities, and details that formal records cannot reach. It traces the contributions of graduates and faculty members, officers and staff in the statewide arena, and reveals the ways the University and the community have learned to deal with each other over time.

The University History series provides background in two areas. First is the external setting, the ways the University stimulates, serves, and responds to the community through research, publication, and the education of generalists and specialists. The other is the internal history that binds together University participants from a variety of eras and specialties, and reminds them of interests in common. For faculty, staff, and alumni, the University History memoirs serve as reminders of the work of predecessors, and foster a sense of responsibility toward those who will join the University in years to come. For those who are interviewed, the memoirs present a chance to express perceptions about the University and its role, and offer one's own legacy of memories to the University itself.

The University History series over the years has enjoyed financial support from a variety of sources. These include alumni groups and individuals, members of particular industries and those involved in specific subject fields, campus departments, administrative units and

special groups, as well as grants and private gifts. Some examples follow.

Professor Walton Bean, with the aid of Verne A. Stadtman, Centennial Editor, conducted a number of significant oral history memoirs in cooperation with the University's Centennial History Project (1968). More recently, the Women's Faculty Club supported a series on the club and its members in order to preserve insights into the role of women in the faculty, in research areas, and in administrative fields. Guided by Richard Erickson, the Alumni Association has supported a variety of interviews, including those with Ida Sproul, wife of the President; athletic coaches Clint Evans and Brutus Hamilton; and alumnus Jean Carter Witter.

The California Wine Industry Series reached to the University campus by featuring Professors Maynard A. Amerine and William V. Cruess, among others. Regent Elinor Heller was interviewed in the series on California Women Political Leaders, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; her oral history included an extensive discussion of her years with the University through interviews funded by her family's gift to the University.

On campus, the Friends of the East Asiatic Library and the UC Berkeley Foundation supported the memoir of Elizabeth Huff, the library's founder; the Water Resources Center provided for the interviews of Professors Percy H. McGaughey, Sidney T. Harding, and Wilfred Langelier. Their own academic units and friends joined to contribute for such memoirists as Dean Ewald T. Grether, Business Administration; Professor Garff Wilson, Public Ceremonies; and Dean Morrrough P. O'Brien, Engineering.

As the class gift on their 50th Anniversary, the Class of 1931 endowed an oral history series titled "The University of California, Source of Community Leaders." These interviews reflect President Sproul's vision by encompassing leadership both state- and nationwide, as well as in special fields, and will include memoirists from the University's alumni, faculty members and administrators. The first oral history focused on President Sproul himself. Interviews with 34 key individuals dealt with his career from student years in the early 1900s through his term as the University's 11th President, from 1930-1958.

The University History memoirs continue to document the life of the University and to link its community more closely -- Regents, alumni, faculty, staff members, and students. Through these oral history interviews, the University keeps its own history alive, along with the flavor of irreplaceable personal memories, experiences, and perceptions.

A full list of completed memoirs and those in process in the series is included in this volume.

The Regional Oral History Office is under the the direction of Willa K. Baum and under the administrative supervision of The Bancroft Library.

April 27, 1993
Regional Oral History Office
University of California
Berkeley, California

Harriet Nathan, Series Director
University History Series

Willa K. Baum, Division Head
Regional Oral History Office

INTRODUCTION--by David B. Flinn

"THE LAIR OF THE BEAR." The first name one thinks of upon hearing that said is, of course, Mike Koll. And for several generations, when one saw or heard about Mike Koll the immediate association was "the Lair."

It is the American style, when reflecting upon a highly successful enterprise or program, to personalize that institution and attach it to the person generally responsible for its success. For the California Alumni Association's summer family camp operation, there can't be any serious doubt that it is Michael J. Koll to whom the majority of the credit must be directed. Located outside of Pinecrest, California, in a beautiful and tranquil setting on the west side of the Sierra, near the Dodge Ridge ski resort and just off the Sonora Pass highway, the Lair has indeed been a huge success.

Mike's contributions to the University of California at Berkeley go significantly beyond this. As a lifelong employee of Cal's independent Alumni Association, he has played a major role in the very substantial growth and expansion of the Alumni Scholarship Program, which is rapidly approaching the point where it will be able to provide \$1,000,000 each year to undergraduate scholars on a merit basis. Additionally, thousands of Cal alums have crossed paths with Mike in such other activities as alumni clubs or class reunions. Even before he was named executive director of the association, he was one of its most visible staff members.

Mike's contributions to Cal predate his joining the Alumni Association. He came to Cal as a student athlete in 1937 and quickly became a "star" of the baseball team. To this day it is believed that he is Cal's most successful pitcher against Stanford--remaining undefeated against the Cardinal¹ throughout his entire four-year career.

Readers will enjoy the following oral history account of how, as a young midwest farm boy from a family which could not afford to pay for a college education, Mike Koll found his way to Berkeley. While everyone will find the story inspirational, Mike's "Lair" friends will fare even better, for they will (as I have) gain real insight into the philosophies and tendencies which we have come to associate with Mike.

¹While "Cardinal" is now the politically correct nickname for this team, which either has no mascot or has adopted an artificial fir tree for that role, we should note for historical purposes that in Mike's time they were popularly known as "the Stanford Indians."

My own first contact with Mike Koll came in a job interview during my undergraduate days at Cal, and I clearly recall it as very much the prototype of what Mike describes in the following volume: a random, flowing, but searching interview that sought little specific information of those job skills that might make me an exceptional candidate to wash almost nine hundred food trays and accompanying cups and utensils every day (not to mention cleaning some twenty to twenty-five "heads"). I was, of course, completely unprepared for this type of interview, since as a former dishwasher in the campus cafeteria I looked forward to establishing a head start towards a maintenance crew job. I was, fortunately, hired and even "advanced" to a starting job of selling candy, ice cream, and hamburgers in the "camp store." It is primarily from that perspective that I read Mike's oral history, but the accompanying volume, which contains a gold mine of information about Mike, the Lair, and Berkeley, will be fascinating reading for anyone.

It was commonplace in the 1950s for young student employees in any job to be scared to death of the boss. With the Lair staff jobs, there was no exception. Mike intended Cal's "family camp" to be as near perfect as could be, and he brought to that effort the same intensity that he brought to the pitcher's mound against Stanford's batters. The natural result was a stern taskmaster, and the result was superb. Firstly, the camp did indeed run with extraordinary smoothness, giving the alumni families who came as "campers" every bit of their money's worth and creating an enormous demand for available spots each summer. Secondly, dozens of students who were fortunate enough to be selected to work under Mike at Pinecrest learned to set very high standards in their work habits, especially in serving "customers."

In 1959, this probably would not be the message conveyed by a dozen or so "staffers" winding down the day in the staff area or preparing to put on a campfire show for the alumni. More likely, some grouching about what seemed to be inflexible work rules or a series of jokes about Mike's competitiveness would rule the day. For many years now, however, it has been clear to me and many others of that generation that we were actually gaining a unique work experience. Mike gave to all of his staffers a realism as to what would be expected of one in the real world if one were to achieve success, and Mike turned out to be an excellent role model to hundreds of Cal students.

And succeed and accomplish Mike's proteges indeed have done. A review of the staff rosters from Mike's years would yield a highly impressive list of professional, entrepreneurial, and academic successes. It is certainly not mere coincidence that these successes fell to people who had worked for Mike Koll, for from Mike one learned above all that if you're going to do a job, do it well. In addition to the hundreds of "staffers" who are indebted to Mike for their work experiences, there are thousands of Cal alumni family members who have enjoyed, and even become

fanatics about, a Lair vacation. Not the least of these many beneficiaries are numerous "children" whose Lair experience encouraged them to achieve the necessary academic merit to be admitted to Cal and hopefully have a Lair summer job.

Appearing to be the first university alumni family camp in the country, there was no easy "model" for Mike to follow. More difficult yet was the request from the then executive director of the Alumni Association that the camp be fully self-supporting. We learn in the following pages why the Alumni Association was so set on hiring Mike Koll for the job. While Mike had never stayed at a summer camp in his life, his strong outdoor background combined with his working experiences, which ranged from logger to naval officer, made him the ideal candidate.

Mike tells us in the accompanying oral history that the merchants of Crescent City, California, co-signed a \$300 note to allow him to come down and attend Cal. We owe those merchants a great debt of gratitude. Without them, perhaps none of us would have ever enjoyed the Lair experience.

David B. Flinn
Lair Staff 1959-1962
President, California Alumni
Association, 1993-1995

July 1993
San Francisco, California

In the spring of 1938, I came down and enrolled in Berkeley. I knew one person, and that was the daughter of Ruby Van DeVenter, the only person I knew on the campus. I went out for baseball, it was freshman baseball then, played, and did well. I was majoring in forestry.

LaBerge: What was Ruby's daughter's name, whom you knew?

Koll: Dwayne.

LaBerge: So her mother was a high school teacher at Crescent City High?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And she just got to know you from watching you play baseball?

Koll: Yes, playing baseball. Everybody came out to the games.

LaBerge: That's amazing.

Koll: It was a town team, and everybody came out to the baseball game. Actually, I invited a couple of other players from Amery, Wisconsin to come out, so the group of us had a bachelor apartment. We all worked in the mill, and we all played baseball. The town was very supportive. In fact, they used to invite us out all the time, bring us food. That is how I got to know Ruby.

When I finally decided to come to Berkeley, I went to the bank and borrowed three hundred dollars; the merchants signed my note. Each year I would come back and work in the saw mill and pay off that note and renegotiate a new loan. They would cosign, and that's how I got through college.

LaBerge: Is three hundred dollars what you needed to get through each year?

Koll: I worked full time when I was here. The loan, with what I could earn by working, would get me through.

LaBerge: How did you get interested in forestry? From working in the saw mill?

Koll: That's right. From Larry Dodge, who helped recruit me to Berkeley, and my working in the sawmill. I've always been an outdoors person; all my life I enjoyed the outdoors. I've hunted and fished, and in Wisconsin we lived near a forest. It was a natural interest of mine to go into forestry. But I must

confess, my biggest goal all along the way was to be a professional baseball player.

LaBerge: It sounds like it!

Koll: From day one. So I enrolled in the spring, and I started playing and I did well on the freshman team. We went virtually undefeated that year. In the summer I went back to Crescent City and played for the town team, worked in the sawmill. It was a pattern that I followed through my college career. In baseball at Cal, I still hold several University records.

LaBerge: Oh, tell me what they are.

Koll: The second-most victories of any pitcher in the history of the University; the only pitcher to defeat Stanford [University] ten consecutive times, I never lost during my four years. And the only pitcher to win the batting championship, the team batting championship.

LaBerge: My goodness. Most pitchers aren't very good batters.

Koll: That's right. I used to play the outfield when I was not pitching. Clint Evans,¹ who was a baseball coach, had a great impact on my life. He was very, very supportive, and we got to be very close friends as well as having a coach-player relationship. He was very good at knowing how to handle me. He used to give me a buildup so I could hardly eat before gametime, I would be all fired up to go out and win. In our senior year we won the championship, and then we went on a barnstorming tour through the East.

LaBerge: So that would have been 1942?

Koll: Forty-two, yes.

LaBerge: So this is right during the wartime.

Koll: Yes. I had a six months deferment so I could finish up school before going into the service. I should also mention in there that in my junior year, I moved in with the Dodge family--Larry Dodge's mother and father, who lived in Berkeley--and stayed with them, at a very reasonable rate--twenty-five dollars a month,

¹See Clinton W. Evans, California Athlete, Coach, Administrator, Ambassador, an oral history conducted by Arthur M. Arlett in 1970. Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.



Mike Koll pitching for the Cal Bears, 1941

Photograph from Blue and Gold, 1941

board and room. And they were very supportive, and had a wonderful home environment for me. They used to come to all the Cal baseball games.

LaBerge: And cheer you on; I mean, as if you were their son.

Koll: Yes, right. I was sort of an adopted son.

LaBerge: Where did you live on campus before that?

Koll: The first two years I lived at the Theta Kappa Nu fraternity; that was Larry Dodge's fraternity. It was a local.

LaBerge: So did you join it? Or could you live there without--?

Koll: No, I joined it. But it folded after two years--it was a small fraternity--and it merged with the Lamda Chi Alpha. And at that point I left the fraternity; the Dodge family invited me to go and live with them, which I did.

LaBerge: So when you were on campus, where did you work?

Koll: I had three jobs. One, I worked at the gymnasium, where I would fold clothes, and then on Saturdays I would get up early and clean the locker out, and do a lot of the chores in the men's gymnasium.

LaBerge: Is this Harmon?

Koll: It was Harmon Gym then, yes. And then I worked for a jeweler, Burke Jewelry, and I was their sales representative on the campus, and went to all the fraternities and sororities and attempted to sell jewelry. I got a commission on everything I sold. Then I worked for the ticket office; I was a gatekeeper at all the athletic events. When I went through college I had six eight-o'clocks every semester. That way I could get started early in the morning.

LaBerge: Have time to go to work.

Koll: Go to work, right.

LaBerge: So that you must still be an early riser, I take it.

Koll: Yes, I am. That was my farm rearing. We used to get up early in the morning and milk the cows before breakfast, and then come in and have breakfast.

LaBerge: Do the rest of the chores?

Koll: --chores, and then go off to school.

LaBerge: Maybe next time we'll go back to the upbringing in Wisconsin. You'll have more to say on the University experience. You know, Clint Evans--we have an oral history of his that you actually might like to read. Maybe next time I could bring it to you, and you could take it home.

Koll: Yes, Clint was a great friend. I gave a memorial address at a couple of events after he died. We had a long-standing relationship. He was again, a sort of adopted father.

LaBerge: Well, because you were out here without a family, so--.

Koll: Yes. One interesting thing. When I was out here, I didn't go back during the summer or school year. I'd been away from home for three years. And when we went back on this barnstorming trip, we played the University of Minnesota. My father came, and he sat on the bench. We won, 2-0. I pitched a one-hitter. And the big thing was, my old elementary school had the day off, and they all came down.

LaBerge: Oh, my gosh. This was still the one-room schoolhouse.

Koll: One-room schoolhouse. They brought them all down. It was about a hundred miles for them to come. And a lot of the local people came. It was rather heartwarming.

LaBerge: So that was the first time you'd seen your family since you'd come out here.

Koll: Right.

LaBerge: And then when did you go back again?

Koll: I went back a couple times after my senior year. For Christmas and when I was in the service.

LaBerge: Any other people who influenced you while you were on campus? Any teachers, or other people?

Koll: Yes, the forestry department was tremendous. Myron Krueger and Joe Josephson¹.

LaBerge: You know, both of those names are familiar. We have interviews with them, too.

Koll: Do you really? Yes, they were just tremendous. There was a family-supportive environment. In forestry, you have to spend one summer in summer camp up at Quincy. And I did that, and they were very good to let me do it my senior year. Usually it would be your junior [year], but I had to work to stay in school, so they allowed me to do it my last year.

LaBerge: So what would you do at summer camp?

Koll: It was a practical forestry experience. We did some surveying, timber cruising, laid out some logging roads, had some fire-fighting experience, went to mills and studied the logging-sawing operations, the planning and the growing of timber, and that sort of thing. It was really an applied course. It was interesting, because when the people at Graeagle heard that I was coming up to summer camp--we were coming off the barnstorming trip my senior year--they got on a train and met me before we got to the Bay Area, to ask me to pitch for their team, which I did. I pitched for Graeagle. The camp was very good, they let me off to pitch. And also for the Reno team--

LaBerge: Reno, Nevada?

Koll: Yes. One game a week for them, and one for the Graeagle team. They would come and get me, and take me to Reno. We won the Nevada state championship that year.

LaBerge: Baseball really was an opening for you, to a lot of things.

Koll: A tremendous opening, yes. And in the service, it also played a role. I'll tell you about that later. But it's always been a very important part.

¹See H.R. Josephson, Forest Economics Research in the United States Forest Service, 1945-1973, and Myron Krueger, An Early Perspective on Forest Economics, Regional Oral History Office, University of California at Berkeley, 1986.

II CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION

[Interview 2: December 17, 1991]##

Family Members

LaBerge: Last time when we met, we talked a little bit about your birth and growing up in Wisconsin. But let's go back there. For instance, maybe you could tell me about your parents and your grandparents, where they came from.

Koll: Yes. My parents, my father, John Cornelius Koll, German descent, was born in Des Moines, Iowa. His parents came over from Germany. I did not know them. My mother, Anna Rilla Koll, was born in Wawbay, South Dakota. And she's half-Irish and half-English. Her parents were the Branums--they were born in the Dakota area; I'm not sure exactly where. I did get to know them, though. I have, my family--do you want sisters and brothers?

LaBerge: Yes.

Koll: There were four children in our family. The oldest is my sister, Dena Stehr, and she lives in Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, is retired, and is very active in the community. The next child was my brother, Raymond Koll, and he lives in La Jolla, and he was in real estate there for a number of years. He came out to California after I did, with my building it up as such a wonderful state. I was next, and then my younger sister, Hazel Hemnes, lives in Largo, Florida. And she was very active in business and management for a number of years, and she and her husband, Gaynor, are retired there.

LaBerge: So you're all spread out, all over the country.

Koll: Well, yes. I came to California first, as I mentioned before, and then I talked my brother into coming out. He [Raymond] came to Crescent City where I was--he was a baseball player--and I arranged for him to play baseball with our team. Then later we talked my mother and father into coming out. They settled first

in Puente, and after my father died, my mother moved to La Jolla, near my brother and his family.

Growing Up on a Farm in Wisconsin

LaBerge: Can you tell me a little about your growing up on the farm?

Koll: Yes. I was born in Comstock, Wisconsin. It was on a farm outside of Comstock. All I remember is, it was rather a rugged existence. We did not have any electricity or indoor plumbing. We moved a couple times, and came to a farm near Amery, Wisconsin, about three miles from Amery. That is where I really grew up.

When we moved there, we had neither electricity nor indoor plumbing. The winters were quite cold; it got down to forty below [zero] in winter. But it was a good environment. Right next to us was a big farm lot, a tree lot, and a lake nearby, Pike Lake. We used to hunt and fish a great deal. I guess that's where I began my great interest in the outdoors.

We went to a little school, Lincoln Center. It was about two miles from our farm, and there was a one-room schoolhouse, one teacher who taught eight grades. It was a rather remarkable background. But it was fairly rugged, and we all had duties in this little school.

Some of us did the janitorial services, others washed the blackboards, and we piled the wood. Some of us were assigned to stoking the furnace; it was heated by a central furnace in the basement. We'd go down every hour and put in more wood in the furnace. It was quite cold in the wintertime. We had a rather unique hot lunch program, where we would bring things from home in little jars, and then one of us would fill a big tub full of water and put it on a heater, and it would heat the water, and then we'd put our jars in it, and then we'd have some hot lunch that way.

LaBerge: Would you share it with everybody?

Koll: No, you brought your own; everybody brought their own from home.

LaBerge: Well, I've never heard of that before.

Koll: We had to go across the street to get the water, and we had outdoor plumbing in our little schoolhouse. [laughter] At Amery

it was very difficult to make ends meet--it was during the Depression, and we didn't have much of an income--but fortunately, we raised a lot of our own crops, and we used to can a lot of fruits and vegetables, and fill the cellar with vegetables.

To supplement some of the income, I had a trap line when I was in the elementary school. I would get up as soon as the daylight, and make the rounds on my trap line, and I was catching muskrats and skunks and mink. Just for a few dollars a piece, but it meant quite a bit, because when you think of what the prices were--. As I recall, a hamburger was five cents; a haircut twenty-five cents; and a suit of clothes, fifteen dollars. But a couple of interesting experiences, I caught a skunk and I didn't have time to change my clothes before I came to school. And pretty soon they detected a smell, and then the teacher would single me out and ask me to go home and change. [laughter]

LaBerge: When you would trap the animals, who did you sell the skins to?

Koll: I would skin them, there were fur dealers in the area. A number of people did trap in that area. It was a financial occupation; some did it full time. I used to sell them and make, oh, twenty to thirty dollars a year doing it. It was a lot of money in those days.

LaBerge: Like, for instance, was mink more valuable than others?

Koll: Mink was worth about twenty dollars, and a skunk, about a dollar and a half, and a muskrat, around seventy-five cents. Our primary crop was strawberries and raspberries on the farm. So we used to go out at daybreak, go out and pick them and take them to the market in town.

LaBerge: This would be a market in Amery.

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And where would it go from there?

Koll: Well, they would sell them locally. We would bring them into a store and they would give us a credit, and we would take that money to buy groceries. Also, my mother used to churn her own butter, and we'd occasionally take butter to the market. We had chickens, and we'd also take eggs in. This is how we bought our groceries for the week.

LaBerge: Well, so if your main crop was strawberries and raspberries, that was just the summer months, right?

Koll: That's right.

LaBerge: So what happened in the winter?

Koll: You had no basic income. We'd live off what you'd be able to accumulate. One big chore--we used to cut all our own wood and split it, and it took about forty cords of wood for the winter. All summer long, my brother and I were out there sawing the wood and splitting it. Then bring it in and stack it so we'd have it for winter.

I went to Amery High School. It was about three miles away. We walked because we didn't have transportation. It was a great high school; there were about two hundred students. The thing I remember most about it was the dedication of the teachers. They took a very special interest in each of us, and encouraged us to go to college, and helped us in many ways. I was a moderately good student. An agriculture teacher used to really work on me, because he wasn't sure I was going to go to college. Obviously, I wanted to go, but at that point it didn't seem too feasible without any money.

Sports in High School

Koll: One thing I remember, coming home--at high school, I played baseball, football, basketball, and I was on the debate team. I used to walk in after dark. When we had a game at night in basketball--I'd go home and have dinner, and then walk back to school, and play, and then walk back home.

LaBerge: So that's twelve miles a day.

Koll: Yes. But it was the only way. I remember one thing from our principal. We were coming back from a debating session and we had a flat tire, and we were standing around, talking. He was asking us what we were going to do. I said, "Well, I'm hoping to go to college," but it didn't seem very likely I'd get a chance. He said, "Look, something that I always found out, that if you want something badly enough, and you're willing to work for it, you probably will get it. Remember that." It had quite an impact. It has been my philosophy.

Also I want to pay a special tribute to the encouragement I got at home. Neither my father nor mother went beyond the grade school. My mother wanted desperately to go, but it was in the old days where you "wasted" education on women. Their role was to stay home and get married and have a family, and that was it. She deeply regretted it and she would have done very well with an education. But she always encouraged us, very strongly, to go on and get an education.

LaBerge: Had she grown up in South Dakota?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Had your father always been on a farm before he--?

Koll: On the farm? Yes. He'd been farming most of his life.

Farm Chores

LaBerge: Did you have animals, too?

Koll: Oh, yes. We had cows and horses. We had about five cows and I think, we had one horse. We had pigs and chickens, you know, all the things you have on a farm.

LaBerge: So that was part of your food, too.

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Did you sell the milk?

Koll: Cream. We used to pour the skim milk out on the ground, because it wasn't considered fit to use for human consumption, as I think back. Interesting. And we'd feed it to the calves when they were young. But after that, it was a wasted product. And now that's reversed. The butterfat in your milk was the important thing, and we had a hand separator. We'd pour the milk in, and run it through the separator, and the cream would be separated off. We would make it into butter, or if we had excess, we would sell it to a creamery. We were located in a heavy dairy area and there were a number of creameries.

LaBerge: Wisconsin is so well known for--.

Koll: Cheese, yes. Well, it was interesting, because no one would ever think of using margarine. And if you heard of somebody, it was

sort of gossip, that they were using margarine instead of butter, and they were outcasts within the community.

LaBerge: So your main chores at home were collecting the strawberries and raspberries, cutting the wood.

Koll: Getting up to clean the barns, and milking cows, and cultivating and hoeing, and all the things that are associated with a farm. Each one of us had assigned responsibilities. And we used to have to pump the water by hand for the livestock. Later on, it was a big thrill when electricity came to our area. But for, oh, five or six years, we used to get up early in morning to milk the cows; we had to clean the barns and then we would pump water for both the house and the stock.

LaBerge: So you did that all the time you were going to school, too.

Koll: Oh, yes. You did that before and after school. When you came home at night, you had chores. You had to feed the chickens, pick up the eggs, and do the other things. Each of us had assigned responsibilities. My sisters, obviously, were in the house. They helped with the washing and cooking. Mother baked all our own bread. When I think of all the things they had to do without the conveniences, it's quite impressive. At high school - I told you about being in high school.

Influences and Goals

LaBerge: What were your favorite subjects in high school?

Koll: I liked economics and history. We had botany, which I enjoyed very much, and agriculture. I guess English was probably my weakest area. I came out basically with an "A" average in high school. We didn't have any foreign language or any chemistry. I'll come to that later, when I wanted to go to Cal, I had to make up those subjects.

LaBerge: And your sisters went on to high school, too?

Koll: Yes, oh yes. My brother and two sisters went to high school. And my oldest sister spent one year at a teacher's college, but the others did not go on to college.

LaBerge: Any other influences from high school besides the principal?

Koll: The coach, the football coach. He was very encouraging. In fact, I remember, I was the quarterback, and I didn't have money to buy football shoes, so he gave me a pair that he had.

LaBerge: What was his name?

Koll: Lein. We called him "Ducky Lein," because he was fat. [laughter] Actually, I don't remember his first name, just "Ducky Lein." But he was very supportive, and encouraged me in sports. In our senior year we won the conference championship in football.

LaBerge: And this would be just in Wisconsin?

Koll: Oh, yes, it was a county championship. It wasn't a big deal.

LaBerge: Because I looked on the map to see where Amery was, and it's really close to Minnesota, isn't it?

Koll: Yes. It's about eighty miles east of Minneapolis.

LaBerge: Well, when you finished high school, what did you think you were going to do?

Koll: My great dream in life was to be a professional baseball player. In high school I did quite well; I had a couple of no-hit games, and I got quite a bit of attention. But I didn't get any scholarships or invitations to go to any of the colleges. I did with football. Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, invited me to come down, but again, I didn't have the finances to do it, and that was before they had athletic scholarships.

My whole life was focused on baseball, a professional baseball career. My brother was also a baseball player; my father had played baseball, and it was a great thing. Every Sunday we were playing someplace. Occasionally, my brother and I would pitch against each other; there was lots of rivalry. [laughter] I wanted to go on to college, but beyond that, the big thing was to be in professional baseball.

Playing Baseball in Crescent City

LaBerge: So when did you decide to go to Crescent City?

Koll: Well, after I graduated from high school, I didn't have any money, so I was just sort of working locally. I got this phone

call from Bob Fern, who was a catcher on the high school team. He came out to California, and [was] working for the Bank of America, was assigned to the Bank of America in Crescent City, California. Crescent City was a strong lumber town; Hobbes Wall Mill was the whole economy of the town. They were gung-ho for their baseball. That was the big recreation. On Sunday, everybody in the town and the loggers came in and it was a big event. And they needed pitching, and they were not doing too well.

So Bob called me, and wanted to know if I would come out. I got on a bus and rode it three days and two nights, and came out to Crescent City. I knew one person, Bob Fern. We did well; we won our championship. And I worked in the saw mill.

There were two Cal alumni there who played a very influential role. One was Ruby Van DeVenter, who was a language teacher at the high school, and the other one was Larry Dodge, who had just graduated in forestry from Cal, and was there as the forester for the mill. And they wanted me to come to Cal. I didn't know Cal from any other school, but I wanted to go on to college, and that sounded great.

So Ruby Van DeVenter then came down to Berkeley to check it out, and took my transcript, and found out about admission. And that's when they decided--I had no foreign language, and I had to make up chemistry, and I had to take one course in math to be eligible. So she came back, and that fall, I went to Crescent City High School. And thanks to Ruby I got three years of Spanish in six months for straight A's, if I promised never to take it again. [laughter] But I did go and make up a year of chemistry and a year of math in six months at the high school. And I was working at the mill, too.

LaBerge: Was it a night school? Or did you go during the day?

Koll: No, I had special time. At four o'clock they would have me as a special student.

LaBerge: With a tutor?

Koll: Yes. And then I took exams to pass the courses. One interesting thing happened. The math teacher, Ruth Hughes, and Ruby Van DeVenter, were sort of rivals. I was taking courses from each of them; they were both trying to do a little better than the other. When it came to the final, I came to Ruth's class and she gave me a pie and said, "This is your final." And when I came to Ruby's course, she had a cake and said, "This is your final." [laughter] So they were both trying to outdo each other. But it

was wonderful. I really had worked hard in their courses, except for the language. I certainly did not learn three years of Spanish, but in the others I did earn the highest grades.

A Forestry Major at Cal. 1938-1942

Koll: So then in the spring semester I came down to Cal. I went out for baseball, and I signed up for forestry. I played freshman baseball; you weren't eligible to play for the varsity. And I had a very good year and got a lot of attention. I got to know many people in a hurry. That's when I met Clint Evans--he was not my coach, we had a freshmen coach--but they used to bring me over to pitch against the varsity. And I knew him quite well.

LaBerge: In his oral history, he says that you were one of the ones who could have gone on to professional baseball.

Koll: I'm glad I didn't, but we'll talk about that later, because it had been my goal. He wanted me to be coach at Cal. I had managed a major baseball team in the service and decided, no, that was not what I wanted to do. I enjoyed playing, but coaching is too nerve-wracking.

At school, I joined a fraternity. Theta Kappa Nu was a local fraternity. Larry Dodge had been a member of it. It was small; it was about twenty-five members in the house. I lived there for two years. Then they merged with the Lamda Chi Alpha, and I left and went to live with Larry Dodge's family.

That was a wonderful thing. It was a family away from home. They couldn't have been more supportive and gracious. Twenty-five dollars a month, board, room, washing, and occasional use of the car, if I wanted it. I was just treated like one of their sons, so it was a marvelous experience.

Jobs During College Years

Koll: In the summer I went back to Crescent City and worked in the mill and paid off that three hundred dollars, and the merchants would

sign the new note for three hundred dollars. And when I was on campus I worked; I had three different jobs on the campus. I had six eight-o'clocks all through college. I would have an eight o'clock every morning--classes--to get started, so I would have free time for my--. I had labs; forestry has a number of physical science labs. And for working.

LaBerge: I think you told me about your jobs before, working with the athletic department. But why don't you tell me again?

Koll: One was working in the men's gymnasium; it was folding clothes and giving out the clothes to the students, and then checking on the lockers. Every Sunday morning I would clean out lockers and reassign them. The other was working on the gates; the athletic department hired me to be one of the gatekeepers at the different athletic events. And the third one, I served as a representative for Burke's Jewelry, and that was the one plum job I had. I got it through Clint Evans. We worked with fraternities, for any of their favor business. They had at that time in the athletic department a policy that if one of the major sports would beat Stanford, you received a gold emblem for each member of the team. I sold them to the athletic department and got a commission on them. Those were the jobs that I had during college.

The Saw Mill

LaBerge: And when you worked in a saw mill, what did you do there?

Koll: I was piling lumber, and it's a very demanding job. The redwood was green and very heavy. You have to stack it in twenty-five and thirty-foot stacks. And it dries for a year or two. We used to have outdoor drying; now they do it by a kiln.

LaBerge: Tell me more about that process. The lumber dries for a year before it's sent on?

Koll: Before you mill it. It's so wet, redwood has very large water content. You leave it out in the weather so the moisture will evaporate and it will dry. Then it can be milled. It has to dry for a couple years before it can be used. Now it's run through a kiln very quickly, an all-controlled process.

LaBerge: So it dries in the logs itself?

Koll: No, in boards. It's run through the mill, and it's milled into two-by-fours or two-by-sixes, and other sizes. Then it's

stacked; when dry it's brought back and planed into a finished product.

LaBerge: I didn't know anything about that.

Koll: During my junior year at Cal the mill closed because of a union strike. Being a forestry major, I was looking for a job someplace in the woods. There was a small mill at Klamath near Crescent City. The mill owner lived in San Francisco. I went to see him and he said he needed someone to be a scaler and to be a woods' boss. He wanted to know if I could scale. I said, "Oh, yes." --I didn't know what he was talking about.

LaBerge: I was going to ask you, what does that mean? [laughter]

Koll: I came home and read up on it. Scaling is what is done when the contractors fall the trees and cut them up into logs. The scaler measures the logs to find out how many board feet are in each log, and the contractor is paid based on the board footage. My job was to do the measuring, but also to determine what logs were marketable. Sometimes the contractor would cut logs that were too small or they were broken or damaged.

It was interesting because the contractors were Klamath Indians. We got to be good friends. They told me when they heard a college kid was coming out there to manage the cutting, they were skeptical. And so they used to scale behind me, to see if our figures would agree. Fortunately they did. Finally they told me what they were doing, and that they were pleased with my work. They took me fishing and we became good friends. But I was obviously very much on the spot at first.

So as far as the scaling, I had to learn from a book how to do it, but it wasn't that hard. And it was a great summer. I worked hard; I lived out in a bunkhouse. For breakfast we used to have hotcakes, pie, sausage, eggs, oatmeal, everything.

LaBerge: There was a cook there.

Koll: Oh, yes. They had a cook.

LaBerge: So this was the summer after your senior year?

Koll: No, it was the summer of my junior year.

LaBerge: Okay. Well, what's a woods' boss?

Koll: A woods' boss controls the cutting. I was known as a woods' boss; I was controlling the cuts, and what was marketable and

what wasn't, and my decision determined what was paid for. They had to peel the logs--redwood has a six- to eight-inch bark. There are workers who follow the cutters. They have big bars to peel off the bark. I had to have big calks on my shoes to walk up and down the logs to do the scaling. I took a fall and I wound up in the hospital for a few days, but that was just part of the experience. But it was a delightful summer. The loggers were good people, hard workers who played square if you played fair with them.

LaBerge: Please go into detail about the saw mill business and everything, because I'm sure a lot of people don't know, including your family, maybe, don't know all the details of what you did, or what was involved.

##

LaBerge: You were just going to talk about the "green chain."

Koll: The "green chain," yes. When they saw the logs, the green logs, into boards, they come out from the mill on a conveyor. Along the conveyor, there are different compartments. And the boards have been graded into different classes and different sizes. Each of us on the "green chain" had a responsibility to pull all the boards that came by graded for our particular compartment. They came at a steady pace. If you dropped one, it was too bad, because there were two or three right behind it.

It was a pressure job, all day long, and the boards were very, very heavy. But after a while you learned how to slide them rather than try to lift them. It's considered one of the toughest jobs in the mill. It paid well, I think about forty-five cents an hour, which was very big money in those days. But it was one of the hardest jobs in the mill. I did that for several weeks.

LaBerge: This would be during the summer?

Koll: During the summer.

LaBerge: Up in Crescent City?

Recruiting Brother for Crescent City Team

Koll: Yes. One other thing about Crescent City I forgot, I probably should mention this. When I came out to play baseball I had some friends back in Amery who were good baseball players, including my brother, and Orville Framstead. I contacted them and told them to come out, and they would have the same situation I did: they could play on the team and work in the saw mill. They both came out and played on the team. We had a bachelor apartment; we did all our own cooking.

We were quite successful in our baseball league with all of our imports. When we won, the town was ours! The women used to bring us food for our bachelor apartment. We had all kinds of dinner invitations. Fortunately we didn't drink, because the lumber mill workers would attend the game, and wanted to take us into the bar and buy us drinks; we could have free drinks, as many as we wanted. [laughter] But we were pretty conscientious --I didn't drink. But it was a marvelous experience. We were very well taken care of and well received and supported.

LaBerge: Now did your brother also pitch when he was on your team? How did you work that out?

Koll: We both pitched. I was the starter and occasionally he'd relieve me; he also played the outfield. But later he went to another team, and we pitched a couple of times against each other in the league.

LaBerge: So did he stay in Crescent City at that point? Or what did he do?

Koll: He went to Fortuna, where he worked in a cleaning establishment. Eventually he married and moved to Los Angeles, where he set up his own cleaning business. Later he left that and went to La Jolla, where he became [active] in real estate.

LaBerge: Let's see. We were talking about the green chain. Any other kind of jobs? Different jobs you did in the mill?

Milkman

Koll: Well, after the one year the mill was closed, I became a local milk distributor. I'm trying to think of the name, I can't remember. Anyhow, they wanted me to drive their truck. It was a demanding job. I got up at four o'clock in the morning, and loaded the truck with the milk--they had a distributing plant in town--and I had a route. It included merchants in town and there was a route out in the country. I did that all summer. And again, it was rather interesting. I collected quite a bit of money along the way and afterwards the owner told me they were checking on me very carefully, to see if I was turning in all the money. And I was, and they became very supportive and very friendly. We had a wonderful relationship. But it was hard work; it was four o'clock every morning, and then you would get through probably about five in the afternoon.

LaBerge: That's a long day.

Koll: Long day. But it was a job. And in those days, jobs were terribly important; there weren't that many around. I got to know all the merchants in town very well, and it was a great experience for me, driving a truck all summer.

LaBerge: And then you'd play baseball at night.

Koll: We played on Sundays.

LaBerge: Oh, okay, just on Sundays. But then you had--.

Koll: We'd practice a couple times a week, but the games were always on Sunday.

LaBerge: Well, let's see. Anything more on college? You told me a little about, you know, a couple of the professors--.

Koll: Yes. In forestry--. It was a wonderful department. Again, the faculty and students were very close. We were small enough number-wise; there were about forty in my class. We went through together as a unit, and there were a number of social activities, a number of school activities that we were involved in, so we formed a very close-knit group. Today they still have meetings and alumni gatherings. The faculty were just tremendous. They again took a very personal interest in each one of us.

Baseball Team Barnstorms the Country

Koll: After my senior year, we won the league--I'll talk a little more about baseball here. I delayed summer school. But when I came back, I was coming back on the train--it was all train travel. On the barnstorming trip the Cal baseball team had their own cars; when we came into a city to play, they'd sidetrack the cars. Our hotel was always with us. We'd play and get back on our cars, and the train would pick us up on schedule and we would go to the next game. When I was coming back on the train to Berkeley, I was met by representatives from the local baseball team, Graeagle, which was near the summer camp. They wanted me to pitch for their team. I agreed to pitch for their team. I was being paid for it, which was very important.

LaBerge: What city was this?

Forestry Summer Camp

Koll: Graeagle, it's not a city. It's a little town; it's near Quincy, in northern California. The summer camp is near Quincy. I played baseball on Sunday. But the rest of the time I was at camp. There were about forty of us. Again, we had practical experience in forestry. We had to design a road, stake out a railroad, cruise timber--cruising timber is going through and measuring the board feet of each tree. You site at the top with an instrument and see how tall it is and then measure the diameter. Then you calculate the number of logs and the board feet. We also did some firefighting. We were taken to saw mills, where we studied the milling operation. It was a good experience and fun.

Part of this summer camp was to do a special project. I got there late, so Myron Krueger said, "Well, you can do it after the camp closes." There were two of us. After the camp closed we lost interest, and we didn't complete the assignment. We came back to Berkeley. About the third week he called me and said, "You didn't do it, did you?" I replied, "No." "Okay. I'll give you a special project." He was very understanding. He could have flunked me, but he gave me a special project, which I completed. I wrote a term paper, and it was approved.

There was a great faculty spirit. It included Bob Cockrell, who is still on the campus, another forestry professor, Joe Josephson, who has come back to campus and taught. I've seen him

at The Faculty Club, and we have lunch together once in while. Those were the three people I was closest to in forestry: I enjoyed forestry. I didn't practice forestry after I graduated, for a number of reasons. However it was a wonderful education, broad-based, and I got a lot out of it.

LaBerge: Well, just the fact of the smallness in the courses sounds wonderful.

Decision to Forego Professional Baseball

Koll: It was. To me it was terribly important because I needed understanding. My big goal at that time was professional baseball.

LaBerge: And they knew that.

Koll: They knew it. And yet, they still--they were lenient but they kept me on track, and kept me going to school. There was another person, a scout from the [New York] Yankees, Joe Devine, who used to come out to our games. There were a number of scouts; they would talk to me about professional baseball. But he kept saying, "Look. Don't quit school. Finish up and then go in." He said, "If you ever get so pressed for money, come to me and I'll loan you some. But stay in school." It was good advice for a young person. I was not as balanced about my priorities as I should have been.

In college baseball, I had some successes. I still hold the record of the second-most wins at Cal. That was when we had a thirty-game season; now they have sixty games. The one who leads, beat me by two, had sixty games of work. I was the only pitcher to win a batting championship. I still hold the record-- I beat Stanford ten straight times, never lost to them. I was given the Jake Gimbel Award, which was given annually to a senior from each of the schools in the Pacific Northwest for excellence in athletics and attitude towards athletics, which was a top honor. I was very pleased to receive it. I was captain of the baseball team and All-Conference a couple of years; they didn't have All-American then. It was a great experience for me.

LaBerge: Anything more on school? Did you play football here?

Koll: No, I didn't. I wanted to, and Clint Evans said, "No way! You'll wreck your shoulder." One event I recall: we were playing Stanford--I mentioned that we hadn't lost to them. But it was

the eleventh inning, and I got on first base with a hit. The batter behind me hit a ground ball to second, and I felt we couldn't have a double play, so I went into second standing up, to break the double play up. The second baseman cut loose with the ball and hit me in the lip, knocked me down; the ball went into left field and we won the game. They called for a doctor out of the audience to attend to me. The son of Stanford's President Sterling was the doctor who came out of the audience, took me into the hospital, and sewed up my lip. He did a marvelous job.

LaBerge: I mean, was it an accident that he hit you in the lip? Or was it on purpose?

Koll: He was a smart ballplayer. The play is to throw and the player coming into second had better get out of the way. He thought that the throw would force me out of the attempt to break up the double play. I wouldn't do it again. But at that time it was do or die, we had to win. I was very competitive. I've always been that way--competitive--in sports. I've found it's much more fun to win than lose.

LaBerge: Well, let's see. You graduated in 1942. Is that right?

Koll: Yes.



Ensign Mike Koll, 1943

III WORLD WAR II, 1942-1945

Commission As An Ensign

LaBerge: And the war was going on, but then you were getting these bids for professional teams.

Koll: The seventh of December [1941], I was pitching baseball for the Petersen Liquor Team in Alameda. And it came over the loudspeaker that Pearl Harbor had been attacked and we were at war. Interesting, because just recently in the [Oakland] Tribune I saw a write-up on that day, and it mentioned the Petersen Liquor Team was playing in Alameda. There were a number of professional ballplayers on that team. And it mentioned that they were playing and I was a pitcher for that team.

But at that time it was very traumatic because we knew that--in fact, a recruiter showed up before the game was over and told us, "Come on, sign up. You've got to go into the war right away now. You won't have a chance to go home," which was ridiculous, but a number of them did respond to the recruiter. There was a bit of hysteria associated with the news. Obviously, that was the end, baseball was no longer played. But I continued my school, and I received a six-months deferment so that I could graduate.

During that time, I was looking to get into the branch of service that I would like, rather than going in as a private. Frank Wickhorst, who was the football coach at Cal, former graduate from Annapolis, was placed in charge of the naval physical conditioning program. I knew Frank quite well from school, and he invited me to apply for it. And so I was accepted and commissioned as an ensign.

We were sent back to Annapolis. Our group was made up almost exclusively of coaches. I'd not really coached; I'd played, but was not a coach. When we were there--we were all commissioned--but when we arrived we had to check in our commission, and they treated us as plebes. And there was a little ensign there

chewing all these coaches out, marching us around, and giving us demerits for doing this and that. They were very ambitious about their conditioning program for us.

The second day there they issued us football pads and equipment, and we went out to a tackle practice and scrimmaged. I looked across to the person I was supposed to tackle, and it looked like a giant over there. It was Hampton Pool from the New York Giants. He read my mind, I guess, because I weighed about one hundred fifty and he weighed about two hundred fifty, and he smiled. So I went up and I tackled him, and he laid down, and he tackled me and gently laid me down. But the next morning half of the coaches couldn't report to duty; they were laid up. Because some of them were fifty and sixty years old, and they weren't in condition; it was just too rigorous. They did adjust their whole program.

I went back with Eddie Neimer, who was the boxing and wrestling coach here at Cal, and Eddie Erdelatz, who was from St. Mary's, a great football star for them. I roomed with them. It was amusing because as part of our conditioning, we had boxing as one of our activities. And a number of our people got carried away, and there were some knockdowns and knockouts. Eddie Neimer and I used to always box together, and he would put up his glove and I'd hit it, and I would put up my glove and he'd hit it. He was a very good boxer and a tough little monkey.

Eddie Erdelatz's final--we were supposed to have a final examination--and the last day he came in almost in tears. He said, "Look. I'll never pass it; I'll flunk out." He said, "You know, at St. Mary's I never took an exam. The coach used to always have me sick or something, and then I wouldn't have to take it, and I would pass." And we told him, don't worry, at that stage they're not about to wash anybody out. I'm sure they threw the exams away after we took them so we all passed it, of course.

LaBerge: This was a written exam?

Koll: Yes, a written exam. It was an interesting experience being at Annapolis, marching, and training, and going through the typical life of the midshipman.

LaBerge: Were you in this group? I mean, it was all a group of athletes, really.

Koll: Yes, it was. They were all athletes. They were either professional athletes, or they were coaches. In my case, I was

sort of in between the two. Most of them were substantially older than I was.

LaBerge: So then did you stay as a group for the rest of the time?

Conditioning for the Pilots

Koll: No. After we finished our six week training we were shipped to different areas. I wound up at Corpus Christi, Texas. Eddie Neimer was out there with me. The skipper there was Frank Lane. He was a former baseball manager, recruiter, gung-ho. But we first all reported to what was known as the main station at Corpus Christi. Again, baseball, I played on the team. I used to lead exercises for a group of, oh, up to five, six hundred in calisthenics. I had a megaphone, and obviously I got to be in very good condition. I was transferred; a number of us went out to the smaller fields. There were four smaller fields near main station, and I was at Rodd Field where I set up the conditioning program and ran it.

LaBerge: So you were conditioning people to get them ready to go overseas?

Koll: That's right. They were pilots; most of them were pilots, although we did have the enlisted men as well. But the big thing was to get the pilots in first-class conditioning. I was very gung-ho, and I used to really wring them out. I got to know my best friend that way. Ed Miller was a young pilot. The problem was that they were in street clothes. And then we'd take them out and they would be just wringing wet when they got through. And he really didn't like it. So one day he invited me to go up flying with him, and he took me up and wrung me out with the loops and the snap rolls and everything, and I was sick for two days afterwards. [laughter] Getting his revenge. But from that we got to be very good friends. We spent the rest of the time flying and hunting together when we had chances. Unfortunately, he was killed in the war.

I organized the team at Rodd Field, and played on it, and then I also played for the All Star team of the base. At Rodd I was a pitcher, and at the All Star I was the outfielder. And the rest of the All Star team were major leaguers. So it was a great experience. We traveled around and played at different bases.

LaBerge: I wonder what happened to the major league teams during the war? They all disbanded because--?

Koll: No. Some of them played, but a lot of the people who were eligible were in the service, and they played on service teams. As I'll tell you later, in the service I wound up managing one of those teams, major league teams.

After we were at Corpus for about one year and a half, they shipped a number of us out; they called us combat cargo leaders. We were shipped to Pearl Harbor, and we were there for a while, and there it was twenty-four [hours] on and twenty-four off. We still had all the blackouts and the invasion concerns.

Eventually we were assigned to a combat mission. My first one was Leyte, the invasion of Leyte. I loaded a ship of bombs and 100-octane gas, which was not the best cargo. We had a crew of seabees on board who were to unload it when we got there. It was a merchant marine ship, and so the captain was a merchant marine. We were comfortable. We had staterooms, the officers did. But when we were placed in the convoy they put us out on the end, because if we were hit, we didn't want to blow up the rest of the convoy.

I guess one of the scariest times in my life was when we were out at sea and we got the warning there was a submarine near and the battle alert came on. You suddenly think of what happens if we were hit and we had to go overboard. There was just not much of a chance for survival, but it gives you a chance to think.

Well, we wound up in the Leyte harbor, and at that time they didn't know what to do with our load, so we were left out in the harbor for almost three weeks. And every day the kamikaze planes would come over and they would pick out a ship and dive on them. We shot down two planes, helped rescue some other people. Finally they let us unload our bombs and our gasoline and get out of there. But we ran out of food, and so we had stew twenty-three days in a row coming home. [laughter] When we got to San Francisco, the one thing I wanted was a green salad.

LaBerge: Where is Leyte? Is it in Hawaii? Or is it in Japan?

Koll: It's out in the South Pacific.

LaBerge: Is it an island?

Koll: Leyte is a big island, yes. It was one of the big battles of the war, a very important one.

LaBerge: How long were you overseas?

Managing a Navy Baseball Team

Koll: Well, we were over, probably, let's see. Well, I got my Christmas presents in July, and they were food and things that I threw overboard. But it was about three months that we were out. We had to wait to go in, and then we waited when we got there, and then coming back. It took about thirty days coming back from there by merchant marine ship, back to Pearl Harbor.

But after I had been back in Pearl Harbor for a little while, I ran into Admiral Mason. He had been the skipper at Corpus Christi, and he was a great baseball fan and used to come to our games. We were swimming at Waikiki Beach and I ran into him on the beach. He asked me what I was doing and I told him. He said, "Well, how would you like to manage a baseball team?" Needless to say, I was very excited.

They had a league made up of all major league ballplayers. There were about eight teams and they played three games a week; it was R & R for the sailors coming off combat. NAS Honolulu was one of the teams, and Johnny Pesky, who was a shortstop for the [Boston] Red Sox, was the manager for the team. He was having a problem because, as he told me later, "I can't be tough with these people, I play with them." They were having a few problems, and he wanted to get out of the management. So Admiral Mason wanted to know if I would go over and be the manager.

I was just out of college and these were all major league ballplayers. I jumped at the chance, but I was quite concerned. The commissioner of the league was Bill Dickey, who was a great New York Yankee catcher. I called him and told him that I was there and I needed some help, asking if he could come over to our games. So he came over and he was very helpful and said, "Look. You've got plenty of material, all you need is to get them to hustle." So I said "Okay." I called a meeting the next day and told the players, "Look. You have a choice. Either you start hustling, I know the Admiral well, or I'm going to ship every one of you out to the front." We went from the bottom of the league, tied for first. [laughter]

It was a very interesting experience playing with them, and it took them a while to get to know where I was coming from. I didn't pretend to know more than I did know; they all knew a lot more about baseball than I did. We played against the top players, including Stan Musiel and Ted Williams. In fact, I pitched against Ted Williams once and got him out. I quit after

that; that was my big moment. That's when I learned I did not want to be a coach.

LaBerge: Because--?

Koll: The anxiety. When you're playing, you can do something about it; you're involved. But when you're on the bench coaching or managing, you see these things go wrong, and there's nothing you can do about it. It's so frustrating. The tension builds up, and there's no way, really, to expel it. And I thought, "I can't go through life that way. I'll die of an ulcer at the age of forty," because I was very intense and very competitive. But I did thoroughly enjoy that experience. It was tremendous.

LaBerge: Well, also then, you had the experience and you knew you didn't want to do that for the rest of your life.

Koll: Yes, that was an important lesson because up to then, baseball and sports had been basically my ultimate goal in life. And when I was in the service, I was thinking of coming back out here and giving a shot at professional baseball. Several teams had expressed interest. But at that time there was very little money for signing.

One of my heroes was Sam Chapman--he was a senior when I was a freshman--and he signed for the unbelievable amount of twenty-five thousand, and went to the Philadelphia Athletics. But a couple of my teammates who were not going to be drafted signed for five and ten thousand. They were in baseball for a while and made a living, but then it was over. And when they came out, they had nothing, they'd lost four or five years from their real careers. Fortunately I learned before I spent the time. In 1946, I got out of the service.

Volleyball

LaBerge: Tell some stories, because they would be great to hear. Any that you want to, that don't need to be censored. [laughter]

Koll: Oh, I'll tell you one great story. When we first got over there, a good friend, Ted Staffler--he'd played football at Cal--we were over there; he was at Hickam Field and I was at Pearl. We got together very quickly. We thought we were pretty good athletes, so we went down to the Outrigger Club to play volleyball. A couple of older gentlemen, they must have been at least seventy

or older, were on the sidelines, and they said, "Hey, like to come on over and play a little volleyball?"

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LaBerge: So you were playing volleyball with these older gentlemen.

Koll: Yes. And they just cleaned us out. They were very skillful, and we were just eager, enthusiastic, and always out of position, and diving for the ball. So they said, "Any idea how old we are?" So they told us and then we walked out. Then we watched them and they did it repeatedly. They would stay on the sidelines until some young charger would come out, and they would beat them just as soundly. So we went to work and started to learn how to play volleyball. [laughter]

LaBerge: How old were they?

Koll: One was seventy-four, and I think the other one was eighty. But they played volleyball all their life, and they just knew how to do it. They were much better than we were.

LaBerge: How long were you in Pearl Harbor?

Obtaining a Discharge from Admiral Mason

Koll: Well, two periods. I was there for almost a year before I first went out, and then I came back and I was there for almost another year, in Pearl Harbor itself. We lived off the base because there was not enough housing. They gave us an allowance, so your life was fine. We used to have transportation back and forth. When I was there playing baseball, we went to all the other islands, and played baseball.

But then towards the end of the war, I was saying, we had the points to get out of the service. They would not let me go, they held me up, stalling and stalling. So I called Admiral Mason, asked him if I could see him. He said, "Sure, come on over." Incidentally, when I got to be manager over there, I built a special box for the admiral. He came to all my games. [laughter] We got to be very good friends. Before I even got out, he asked me to stay in and be the athletic officer for the Pacific, all the Pacific; he was in charge of all the Pacific bases. But I turned it down because I knew he was only going to be there another year, and when he would leave, obviously, I

would leave. And so there was no reason, but it was pleasing to be invited to serve.

When I went over to see him, he said, "What's the problem?" I said, "I have enough points to get out, and they won't let me go." "Oh," he said, "why don't you go back?" When I got back, my bags were packed, everything was ready to go, and a jeep was waiting to take me to the ship. I learned afterwards that there was an order out that no one could see the admiral about releases. He just picked up the phone and that was it. The admiral was king.

LaBerge: But you don't know what was holding it up before that?

Koll: Oh, they didn't have a replacement; they tried to hold everybody up. In order to get someone else in and train them, it was much easier to keep the people on, and it wasn't their top priority to get us out.

LaBerge: So you were shipped back to San Francisco?

Koll: Yes, I came back to San Francisco.

LaBerge: And what did you do then?

Working in Chicago

Koll: Well, when I came back, I spent three years in Chicago. I met a person in the service who had an insulation company in Chicago. And he invited me to come back and work for him. At the moment I did not have any particular job to come to, and it was very good pay. So I thought, "Well, I could certainly give it a try." So I went back to Chicago.

LaBerge: What was the name of the company?

Koll: Universal Fabricated Products Company. It was on Michigan Avenue. I hated the weather back there. It was terribly windy and cold, and summer was hot. It was not my thing. Again, it paid good money, but finally after a couple of years I thought, "Life is too short for this. I hate going to work every morning." Finally I said, "This is it." I thanked him, and came back to California. I didn't have anything in mind at the time, I just thought I've always been able to find something in California. And I didn't want to live in that area anymore. So I came back and I landed at Crescent City. I worked with a

contractor for the summer, which actually turned out to be good experience later for the Lair. I have a good knowledge of construction.

IV LAIR OF THE GOLDEN BEAR

Pitching at the Varsity-Alumni Game, 1949

Koll: There is an alumni baseball game; each year the alumni play the varsity. It's in January, and they send invitations to all the former players. I came down to the game to pitch for the alumni, and Stan McCaffrey was there. He was playing in the game; he was a first baseman. He was just taking over as the executive director of the Alumni Association.

He asked me what I was doing and I told him I was looking for something. And he said, "I may have a job for you." And I said, "What is it?" He said, "We need someone to work for the Alumni Association and set up a summer camp, a family camp." They had operated one the year before at Shasta but it was not successful. They wanted to start one at Pinecrest. And I asked him all about it and he said, "Well, it'd just be for the summer months." And I said, "No, I'm not interested unless I have a full-time job."

So I went back to Crescent City and the following week I got a phone call. He said, "Come on down. I think I have something for you." He had talked to the board and agreed to make it a full-time job. It included duties in addition to the camp. I was delighted, and came to Berkeley to work for the Alumni Association February 1, 1949.

LaBerge: Was it right over here on campus? Or where was the--?

Koll: The office was the top floor of Stephen's Union. The whole Alumni Association had only a couple hundred square feet. My first office was five-by-nine. I think there were only about seven or eight of us on the staff at that time.

LaBerge: So what was your title?

Koll: Well, it eventually became director of education and recreation; I don't know if I even had one at first.

LaBerge: Had you played ball with Stan McCaffrey?

Koll: He was a senior when I was a freshman. I pitched against him, but not on the same team, because freshmen weren't eligible to play varsity. But he knew me well.

So my job then was to set up Pinecrest, and also, we were going to run the camp at Shasta for another year. I was a maintenance man, I was a manager, I was a program supervisor. I had the full responsibility. I had never been to a camp in my life. But fortunately I had had a number of experiences: I was an outdoors person; I had a forestry background; in the service I'd worked with people. I mentioned construction--you add it all up and it was a fairly good background for what was expected.

The Challenge at Pinecrest

Koll: When I think of my first year again--the camp's operational budget was \$10,000. Before Pinecrest, it was Camp McCoy, a YMCA camp for boys. The YMCA decided they were going to give it up because they had two camps, and one was closer to San Francisco; it was in the Monterey area. And they couldn't afford them both, and it didn't seem feasible to continue Camp McCoy. They sold it to the Alumni Association for \$10,000, their rights to the camp and the improvements.

There were buildings on it, a number of buildings, rather primitive. It had chemical toilets. We pumped all the water from the stream. We had a pressure pump and a tank. The dining room had a dirt floor. The swimming pool--there was no filter, each week you drained it and then filled it from the stream. They only had, I think, about twelve cabins. They did have the doctor's cabin, and they had a log cabin lodge with the floor sunken in, but it still could be used, and they had a log cabin office.

LaBerge: Were the cabins like they are now? Or were they fully enclosed?

Koll: They were log cabins with the canvas around the sides. We lost a number, and replaced most of them, but they were the ones that we acquired. They would accommodate from four to six people. I had

a busy spring, as you probably can imagine, getting the camp in shape and getting all the materials. I had a floor put in the dining hall, and we built a ramp to the kitchen so that food could be wheeled in. The dining hall roof was covered with canvas. We added a number of tent cabins around the camp. We built up the capacity to about one hundred twenty. It ran for ten weeks.

Hiring Staff for the First Summer

LaBerge: So did you have to go about hiring people and advertising?

Koll: Everything.

LaBerge: Wow!

Koll: As far as the brochure, we had a staff person, Howard Cook, who was the editor of The California Monthly. He helped put the brochure together. But yes, I interviewed and hired the staff for both camps, at Shasta and Pinecrest. Shasta got started, but we only had a very weak response. The year before it had not been that successful. So I closed it down after about four weeks. But at Pinecrest, we had a good response.

But hiring, yes, I interviewed a number of staff members, and one who played a rather important part in my life, Jane Biedenbach, my wife. [spells her name] I'm sure I got the Biedenbach right. She was lucky to get rid of that name.
[laughter]

LaBerge: So was she a student?

Koll: Yes, she was a junior at Cal.

LaBerge: Why don't we take an aside and tell me about interviewing her, and how that all developed.

Koll: She came in to apply; she wanted to work at the Lair.

LaBerge: Did she know anything about it?

Koll: No, no one knew anything about it; it was a new program.

LaBerge: And did you think of the name?

Koll: I don't know; I'm not sure how the Lair came about.

LaBerge: It maybe didn't have a name the first year.

Koll: The first year it was the Shasta camp, and then the Lair. Somehow we came up with the Lair of the Bear, Camp Gold. But when we interviewed the staff, her enthusiasm is what really impressed me at first. She was all excited, seemed very enthused, and I thought she would make a wonderful staff person. I hired her to work in the dining hall. I think we had a total staff of about nineteen then. Jim Cullom, a football star at Cal, was also on the staff.

LaBerge: Did you do half men and half women?

Koll: It was about half and half. In those days the maintenance crew was all men and the dining hall was all women, and the Kub Korral obviously was all women. We paid the women less than the men. [laughter] But there were a lot of women who wanted the jobs, and not that many men. I don't know, we paid only seventy-five, eighty--it was under one hundred dollars the first year for the salaries. I hired a cook; I was very fortunate to get a wonderful cook, Joe Jackson, who had cooked for years on the campus at the SAE fraternity house. Just a wonderful person. He and I had a great relationship. After all these years he was with us, he would never call me anything but Mr. Koll. I kept after him and all, but one of the finest gentlemen I've ever known.

LaBerge: It was perfect for him. He didn't have to cook during the summer [at the fraternity house].

Koll: Yes. For a number of years we used fraternity cooks for our camp cooks. But the problem, their conditions were quite primitive in the kitchen. At first we barbecued on bedsprings, the first two years. The kitchen had just a couple ranges and a grill. And to cook for all those people, and refrigeration wasn't very good. A real challenge. I used to lie awake at night thinking of the program. "How do you put together a program?"

LaBerge: You almost needed that before you could hire people, to tell them what they'd do.



First Lair staff, 1949.

embarrassing situations. Little things that are challenging, and how they would respond. Not the answers, but how they would personally respond to it. Because in a camp environment, they're going to be thrust into many situations. I felt if I related well to them we'd have a good relationship at camp.

One interesting experience--at first we used to interview in Davis as well as Berkeley, for a couple reasons. Number one, at Davis, we helped them get their Alumni Association started. In fact for a number of years Davis graduates were a part of our Alumni Association. So we had a close working relationship. Also they had some talented students. At first we probably had to recruit a little harder to get our talent for special areas than today. I would call up their Bureau of Occupation and tell them that I was coming up and would like to interview. They would have probably twenty students lined up.

They said, "What do you want, one half hour for an interview?" I said, "No, seven minutes." "You can't do it in seven minutes." I said, "Well, let me give it a try." She was still very critical. I said, "Well, you pick out the people you feel are the best of this group." And we'd sit at the end of the day and compare notes. When we got through, we were almost identical.

LaBerge: And you only spent the seven minutes.

Koll: Seven minutes. It was just how I reacted and how they responded. I'd interviewed a number by then and had a feel for what I wanted. We hired some very good people from Davis.

LaBerge: And so that changed later to just the Berkeley campus?

Koll: That's right. We also took some from Santa Barbara, as I'll tell about later. The first Camp Blue director was from Santa Barbara, a coach from Santa Barbara. In fact, he brought a couple of his players with him. Art Gallon,¹ whom I mentioned you should interview, was the first director at Camp Blue. He had been an assistant athletic director at Cal previous to his going to Santa Barbara as their basketball coach.

[Interruption]

¹See appendix for a recollection of Art Gallon.



Jane and Mike at the Biedenbach home, 1950

Jane Biedenbach

LaBerge: We're going to talk about how you met your wife and interviewed her.

Koll: When she came in, I said, "I was very impressed with your enthusiasm," and virtually hired her on the spot. But at that point, we had no romantic ideas. I got to know her better, and obviously was impressed with her. We were married in October of 1950. At the Lair, every Saturday night the staff would have a party.

LaBerge: It's been going on forever, right?

Koll: That's right. We started early. Well, the reason is I wanted to keep the staff in camp. Otherwise they were going to have a party on their own. And I thought it's much better if we supervised it and organized it. We had committees who would plan the parties and move them around to different locations. We used to have them away from camp more than we do now, but it was a smaller group.

When I came back from camp, my job had been extended to include the field program, working with clubs. I organized a lot of club activity.

Primitive Conditions the First Year

LaBerge: When you talk about clubs, you mean in different cities? Alumni clubs?

Koll: Alumni clubs around the state, yes. When I get to the Alumni Association I'll talk more of the philosophy and what was involved in it. But this is just still with the Lair. The summer got off to really a good start. Camp was quite primitive. As I mentioned, we had chemical toilets; they were a horrible problem, but everybody took them in good stride. We had secondhand beds that I had bought, and the mattresses were just pads; we had no innerspring mattresses.

It shocks me now to think that we pumped the water from the stream in back of the kitchen. We pumped it all from that river into the pressure tank, and used it for our camp with no chlorination or any treatment. We got by fortunately. Every week we would drain the pool and then fill it. There was a line

that ran from the staff area down into the pool, and it was cold as the dickens because it was river water.

We had one tennis court. One of the big events was on Friday, as you know, the baseball game. It was between the staff and the campers. I always had good athletes on my staff, and we did quite well, and we used to win. [laughter]

LaBerge: No matter what their talents are, they all seem to be good athletes.

Koll: Yes, they really are. The shows were a lot of fun.

LaBerge: Did you have the shows from the very beginning?

Koll: Very beginning. And we had a camper night, now they put on skits. I think that was Thursday night. They had a show where they put on skits. In that [pointing to Campfire Tales: A History of the Lair of the Bear, by Lisa Harrington] you'll see some of the songs and some of the plays that they did and others they helped put together.

A great spirit started to evolve. I think some of it was the hardship, living together closely in tents, and the things that we did together. I call it almost a cult spirit for the Lair, it's so strong. People from the very first year became great friends, like the Kragens, the Tucks,¹ and the Blues. They attended the very first year, and they came back every year. They also became fast friends outside of the camp.

LaBerge: How did you even think of having the shows or the kind of programs they have for kids? Or had somebody kind of set that in place for you?

Koll: Yes, we had somebody put it in place. We had a program director who had done a lot of work with recreation and youth.

LaBerge: Who was a student, or--?

Koll: No, she was not. Pauline Foster was our program director, and she helped put the programs together. She worked in San Francisco with, I think, YMCA, YWCAs. And we had people on the staff who had talent and ideas. Before we went to camp they helped put together some program ideas.

¹See Janor Tuck's interview at p. 270.

[Interview 3: January 9, 1992]##

The Shasta Camp

LaBerge: Last time when we met, we started talking about the Lair and the beginnings, and how you were hired.

Koll: We have that covered?

LaBerge: We have just a little bit, when you were hired, and how you picked the staff. But I think there is more early history.

Koll: Yes. I think I'll start back, and then we can fade it out, though, if we have duplications.

LaBerge: That's right. One question I had from just doing some research. I read about the Wawona House Party.

Koll: I ran the program for about, oh, eight or nine years.

LaBerge: Okay. I was thinking that was kind of a precursor, or that led into this idea.

Koll: See, in here, [Campfire Tales: A History of the Lair of the Bear] you probably picked that up in here. It mentions the Wawona House Party. It was--not really. It was an entirely different format, and different program emphasis.

LaBerge: Okay. Well, let's go with the Lair.

Koll: Starting with the Lair, its early history, certainly a number of us would like to be able to claim that the Lair was our original idea. But actually, it came from a woman by the name of Mildred Clemens, who had some property north of Shasta Lake, and wanted to sell it. She thought about the Alumni Association, and talking them into buying it. She came to Berkeley and spent some time with Bob Sibley.

The interesting thing about Mildred Clemens, she was a very distant relative of Mark Twain. Anytime you'd talk to her, she would always weave in, "Mark Twain would have liked this," or, "Mark Twain would not." In a little research that I did, she had not had any contact with him.

She did a good selling job with Bob Sibley, and finally convinced him that the Alumni Association should give some thought to acquiring the property. During that discussion she came up with the idea that they ought to start some sort of a camp for alumni. Bob Sibley had a great imagination, and thought the camp would be the hub for a whole California colony in that Shasta area. He was all excited about starting an alumni family camp.

So he went to the Alumni Council and proposed to them that they would go ahead, buy the property and then build the camp. At that point they were quite skeptical, as I mentioned before. They weren't quite sure why the Alumni Association should be involved in something almost like a resort. They felt there were plenty of other activities in the association to be concerned with, rather than going into the camping business. This was the first idea for a family alumni camp; there were no others around the country.

But Bob was very persuasive, and finally convinced the council that they ought to give it a try. So he promised them that they could set it up as a tent city, without any real financial obligation, to give it a try and see how it would go. And they agreed on that promise. It turned out that there was some substantial financial involvement in it, however, they started. Anna and Dick Bahme, Class of '40, were selected to be the first managers at the Shasta camp. It was actively promoted in The California Monthly and brochures. About a thousand people, alumni, signed up for it.

LaBerge: This was 1948?

Koll: Nineteen forty-eight. Bob Sibley and Carol were up there a great deal during the summer, and they and the staff did a really great job of promoting the camp and the program. But there were many things wrong with the camp, starting off with the location. It involved a long drive from where most alumni populations are located. It was about a five-hour drive from the Bay Area, and a two-day drive from Los Angeles. The trip involved going through the very hot valley. Unfortunately, once you left the main road, you had seven miles of unimproved road, very dusty, to get to the camp.

The camp was nestled in a little valley, and the temperatures--it was at a 3,500 foot elevation--the temperatures during the summer got very high, into the nineties. Unfortunately, at that elevation there is a great deal of poison oak, and there were also a substantial number of rattlesnakes in

the area. That added to some of the problems at camp. There weren't open areas for play fields.

The swimming was accommodated by going to Shasta Lake, which was about half a mile away. Unfortunately the lake levels would drop during the summer, and there was a mud flat that you had to cross to get to the lake. Near camp there was a stream that had a--they called it the "deep freeze." It was a cavern that was filled with water, and people used to swim there, but it was very cold, and it didn't lend itself very well to any kind of swimming program.

At the end of the season, the general feeling was that the idea had some merit, but certainly we ought to look for a site perhaps more accessible, and having more appealing features. Stan McCaffrey was just coming on as executive director of the California Alumni Association. He was replacing Bob Sibley.

Perfect Site at Pinecrest, 1949

Koll: So one of Stan's early responsibilities was to try and find another site. A committee was formed, and they contacted many different agencies, including the [U.S.] Forest Service. And they learned that the YMCA in San Francisco, owned and operated a camp known as Camp McCoy at Pinecrest. They were giving it up because they had established another camp closer to San Francisco, and they weren't able to afford the two. So they were contacted, and the Alumni Association was able to buy for \$10,000 their facilities and their permit. It was on Forest Service land.

LaBerge: So it's a lease kind of thing?

Koll: Lease, yes. The Forest Service was very happy to have the University of California Alumni Association take it over, so they agreed to it. In the site was about ten acres, and the facilities were quite primitive.

It was a great location, however. The north fork of the Tuolumne River runs right alongside the boundary of the camp. Pinecrest Lake was only about three-quarters of a mile away. It was located in Tuolumne County, and only about 165 miles from the Bay Area, and less than a one-day drive from Los Angeles, which was important. It's at a 5,400 foot elevation, so beyond the poison oak level, and the temperatures throughout the season were

quite moderate. They would run from about sixty to eighty [degrees], which were very good recreational temperatures. And it wasn't high enough to provide an altitude problem for people who might have some concern about heart condition.

There was an excellent road leading up to it, and another important feature was that supplies were quite accessible. In Sonora there were a number of good stores. Right at Pinecrest there was also a store. But more importantly, we were close to the [Central] Valley, where we were able to get all kinds of fresh fruits and vegetables at a reasonable price. So all in all it was an ideal site. And I might add, the longer we stayed there, the more we were impressed with the site itself. It's probably about as perfect a site as you can find for the program that we planned.

Alumni Council Agrees to a Trial Run

- Koll: Well, then the next step was to go to the Alumni Council and get approval. They were not overly enthusiastic about it at first; they had had a rather unfortunate experience the year before. Finally they agreed to go ahead, but the Lair had to be set up on a special account. It had to be totally self-supporting, and it had to pay--if they would put up the front money--the money had to be paid back from Lair receipts, along with interest on the money. And it was going to be reviewed each year, to decide whether we should continue it. But also, the Sibleys were very concerned that they were not giving Shasta a second-year chance, so they agreed to advertise the Shasta camp as well. Well, the alumni response was that about a thousand signed up for Pinecrest, and only fifty for Shasta. Obviously, we closed it shortly. My first assignment was to close down the Shasta camp, which wasn't too popular with the Sibleys. It was something that had to be done.
- LaBerge: Did you have any input in picking the site up at Pinecrest?
- Koll: Not at all. It had been selected before I came on the scene.
- LaBerge: When we're talking about the Alumni Council, will we go into that later? What the Alumni Council is and how--?
- Koll: Yes. And the Alumni Association, we can cover that.

So the next thing that Stan had to do was to find someone to manage it and develop this program. He had other responsibilities, and there was no one on the staff who had had any experience. I learned afterwards that he offered it to Emery Curtice, who was the manager of the Berkeley Municipal Camp at Echo Lake, and also to Bill Rhodes, who ran a very successful Berkeley Municipal Camp at Tuolumne. Both of them turned it down; they didn't think the Alumni Association could successfully operate a camp program. He told me about it later. But I must add that both were extremely helpful to me once I became involved with it.

LaBerge: I was wondering whether--. I didn't know if those camps were in existence before the Lair, and whether their programs, like could you look at their programs to see how you could set things up?

Koll: I'll come to that in a minute, yes.

LaBerge: What were you going to be doing in the time that you weren't doing the Lair?

Koll: Oh, I was going to be working with the Alumni Association, general field work, scholarship work, all kinds of general alumni activities. The first assignment that I had was to negotiate with the Forest Service to extend the lease. Ten acres was simply not enough for what we had in mind. Fortunately the adjacent areas were Forest Service land that had not been utilized, just standing timber. So I went to the Forest Service, the ranger at Pinecrest, and started talking about extending our lease permit. Fortunately he was a Cal forestry graduate, and I had graduated in forestry at Cal, so we immediately had a lot in common. He graciously, and perhaps a little contrary to policy, granted us a seventy-five-acre lease, which was the most acreage that they had granted to anyone. But they felt it was a very good cause, and that the University would use it well.

LaBerge: So where is that land?

Koll: It surrounds the Lair. It gives us a buffer around the Lair operation. We probably have about twenty acres at Camp Gold involved in the building areas, but the adjacent areas are protected. We were very fortunate, because beyond the Lair the Forest Service land has not been developed, and so we have access to undeveloped, relatively primitive areas. The fee was five dollars per acre, which was very, very reasonable as we look back at it now, and it was a twenty-year lease. At the end of twenty years we had the option of renewing it, and there's been no problem, because our usage is much better than any other

organization. We've tried to be good campers, keep up the site, and follow Forest Service policies.

Well, from then on, starting the camp was a bit of a challenge. Programwise there was no successful format which to copy; we were the first alumni association to ever come up with the idea of starting an alumni family camp. So we were basically starting from scratch. And the site at Pinecrest was quite different from Shasta, and there was very little carryover from the program and the operation that we had at Shasta that could be applied to Pinecrest. In fact, perhaps there were more things that you shouldn't do than should do as a result of that first year's operation. So it was basically sitting down and trying to figure out exactly what type of a program we should have. And I must say that I had a number of sleepless nights trying to figure it out. I really hadn't had any camping experience previously. I had not attended a camp.

I did have some background that was really helpful; I grew up in an outdoor environment in Wisconsin. There were a number of resorts in the area, so I had some idea of accommodating vacation people. I'd majored in forestry, so I had a background about the forest. I was involved in recreational programs from doing my tour in the navy. In regards to the physical plant, I'd worked six months with a construction contractor. All these experiences did prove quite helpful in getting the camp started.

Family-Oriented Program

Koll: As I kept thinking about it, I was quite concerned, because it became apparent to me that vacation is a very special and precious thing. We look all year towards our vacation. And it's something that we don't want to lose or spend in an unpleasant or uncomfortable environment; we have great expectations of it. We had the obligation of providing what I felt was probably a wonderful experience. One of the concepts I had was the camp should be family-oriented. I've always had a concern about the deterioration of the family as a unit. It seems like we were so busy in our everyday lives that we would go in all different directions. And we seldom have time for one another in the family, to play together, to see each other in a relaxed environment. As the idea of the camp, I felt that was one of the great things that it could provide. People could come up there and play together as a family, living very closely together as well. This would be a very helpful experience for them and very positive, something on which they could build a family unity.

There's one experience I've had that I've always treasured. One camper came up, a husband and wife, and two teenage daughters. And when we sent them to their particular tent, he came back and said, "I'm sorry, we can't live in that tent. It's a small tent, and I've never lived close with my daughters. It won't work out. We've got to have another tent." We were sold out, and I told him "I'm sorry," we just didn't have anything else to give him. I asked him if he wouldn't please give it a try. He reluctantly did, and Friday he came to me, and he said, "I want to sit down and talk to you a minute." He said, "We had the greatest experience our family has ever had in our life. Living together in that small tent, getting to know each other and understanding each other and playing together, this is wonderful." He obviously made my day.

LaBerge: Is there some kind of a policy about splitting families up, or having an adult in each tent, or something like that?

Koll: No. The only thing we have done policywise is not to allow a group of teenagers to come up without parents, or children without parents. There must be at least one adult. And we can sometimes, we'll split them off, separate them to some extent, but the parent, an adult, must be present. Otherwise they would be too much of a responsibility for us.

The Lair Spirit

Koll: Secondly, I felt that the Lair should definitely be a friendly place. The staff should reflect a very friendly attitude. A great positive thing that we had was the fact we're all alumni of the University of California. No one was really an outsider in the group, we all shared something, there was a chance to build really a great spirit. And it has happened over the years. The Lair spirit is almost phenomenal, it's almost like a cult, it's so strong.

Another thing I like about the Lair is that materialistic values are replaced by personal values. You can come up in a Cadillac or a Ford or a battered-up old truck. You park your cars in the parking lot, and no one gives a darn what your financial status may be. More importantly, are you a good athlete, are you good in campfire shows, or do you have good stories, you're very friendly. You must sell yourself on a personal basis. I've really been pleased with that; I think that's important. Too often we judge people by their

materialistic accumulation rather than individually. And that's something that we were able to do.

Getting back to the family part, one tradition that has developed--and it was hard the first year--I thought it would be important because people coming up the first year were going to wonder what kind of a camp is it. We should greet them with a friendly outreach. So we started the idea to have the staff present and serve punch to the campers. It started the first year, and it's still going strong today.

LaBerge: With the bug juice.

Koll: That's exactly it, the bug juice. And it was really interesting, because I've had people say, "You know, I was concerned, but the minute the staffers came out and served me punch, I knew it was going to be a good experience." I think it's helped a great deal. For years we used to have the manager present and would greet them personally, and we used to have staff that would take them to their tents. Over the years it's strayed from that, but it's still a friendly environment where you're welcomed, and you're made to feel this is something very special for you.

LaBerge: I think it makes a big impression on the kids, too, because they're always kind of looking around, "Well, do I know anybody, and what's this going--?" And they see the staff, and it's great.

Koll: I think you're 100 percent right. Another thing is, the University theme should prevail, but should not overpower. That was one of the complaints that I'd heard from the Shasta camp. They felt they were almost at a University revival meeting, there was so much pressure on listening to talks about the University and the songs and everything else. You felt that you were pushed into it. My feeling is that it should be there, but it should be more subtle; it's probably more effective. It's something we've tried to follow most of the years. I think it's been successful.

Keeping the Camp a Camp

Koll: Another concept that I had, that we should maintain the Lair as a camp, no more, no less. We shouldn't try to make it into a motel, third-rate motel, or it was not to be a totally primitive experience, but something that I've always referred to as ideal roughing conditions. We do live in tents, and we do have

community bath and showers, but it still is sort of a camping experience without some of the hardships that traditionally go with camping on your own.

I feel it's one of the contributions I've made over the years. There's always been pressure to overdevelop the Lair. People have come up to the Lair, including some of our Alumni Association presidents, insisting that we blacktop all the paths, that we put electric lighting all through the camp, that we install a loudspeaker system so they could give announcements and have music throughout the day. They even wanted to have separate eating periods for the children and adults. They wanted to extend the meal hours so they didn't have to come--we now come at 5:30, early, there's a reason for it. But they wanted all these things; they wanted it almost like a motel-hotel.

Fortunately, we had success early, and a following, and so the camp committee and myself were able to rebuff them and maintain the idea that the camp was not going to be everything to everybody. It is going to serve a segment who want a camp. It includes a very large segment of alumni. It would be a mistake to keep changing it.

On the other side, some people wanted it to be more primitive. They wanted to do away with many of the improvements that we have. We have been able to maintain just a basic, original philosophy, which I think added a great deal to the success of the camp.

LaBerge: At the end of every session you have evaluation forms or something. You must get a wide variety of comments.

Koll: Yes, particularly when we first started out, because it was quite primitive, and we had a lot of things to improve. We did, we've changed a lot of things. But interesting, a comment has been made by a number of people who stayed away for a number of years and have come back to it, and have said, "You know, it's so pleasing to come back and find the basic concept had not changed." The Lair is one of the few things that you don't have to constantly change, modernize. It was built on the idea of an outdoor experience, and a somewhat primitive experience. Frankly, I think it's contributed to the spirit that we have. Living in a tent in close quarters, doing a bit of roughing it brings everybody together.

A good example is a number of other universities have started alumni family camps. And they've all come to us; we were the first. I've been a consultant for a number of them. They've always said, "Well, it's a wonderful camp, but it's just too

primitive for our alumni." And they've all gone ahead and developed facilities well beyond anything we have. But interestingly enough, none of them have achieved the success that we have. They don't have the loyalties, the feeling of the people coming back. Many of our campers have now been coming back for fifteen, twenty, twenty-five years in a row. It's a great feeling of pride for them and being part of something special.

They've [the other camps] lost that. They've had successful operations, but I think we have something rather special. And we do have dust, and we do have a lot of things to contend with, but it's just part of the camping experience.

- LaBerge: Well you know, we have gotten brochures from the Santa Barbara camp, and every time we look at those, the kids particularly say, "People want to go stay in a dorm?" I mean, that is part of it.
- Koll: Blacktop playground, just blacktop playground. And the kids want to play in the dust, and they want to pick up a rock and throw it in the stream; they want to have all kinds of experiences where they can run and be--
- LaBerge: Free.
- Koll: --free. Something we had as an early concept--we talked about the family, built around the family--that children were not going to be just included; they were going to be welcomed. Too often in a resort facility today, children are tolerated, but not really featured. And it's really helped us. I've had a number of parents call and say, "I hate you!" I say, "Why?" and they say, "Well, we wanted to go to some exotic place for vacation and the children wouldn't allow it. 'The Lair is where we want to go,'" Because they know what is there, they have friends that are coming back, and they build an association, and to them, that's vacation. They're not nearly as adventurous as some of our adults. So that's been really the strength of the camp, I think, and a real good effort went into it.

Another thing is, I felt very importantly that our programs, our whole camp structure, should not regiment campers, but give them as many options as possible. I found that many people who came for the first time remembered their Scout experience or their Campfire Girl experience, and were almost reluctant to come to the camp, because they felt they would be forced to do things. They would be a slacker if they didn't participate in all the different activities. I felt that was certainly a wrong approach, to make them feel they had to do things. It was their vacation, and they should be able to spend it as they wish.

It was important that we have a wide variety of activities available for campers, enough to keep the most active ones fully involved, but all be offered on a very voluntary basis, so no one was pressured. The program had to sell itself. If it was interesting, you wanted to participate, fine, but if you didn't, there was no reason why you couldn't spend the whole week seated underneath the tree with a book, if that was your idea of vacation.

But interestingly enough, I found over the years that most people look at a vacation as not a time to relax and enjoy a good book, but 90 percent of the people, when they get to the Lair, wanted to do all the things they haven't done all year. They sign up for all the tournaments, they take part in all the events, and at the end of the week they're exhausted. Their muscles are sore, but they have had a wonderful time, and they're looking forward to coming back.

But there are people who want to have their more relaxed environment, and the opportunity must be provided. I think our staff has accepted the philosophy very well, and I think that's one of the strengths of the camp. We're moving rather rapidly, aren't we?

LaBerge: Yes, this is great. If you don't have something to go into right now, do you want to talk about how you adapted to changes? I was thinking like for the people who just wanted to relax, you built the Vista Lodge. But I know there are other things like that, how you've adapted the kids' programs.

Koll: Yes, the programs, how they've changed over the years, yes.

Staying within Budget. 1949##

Koll: --over the years, or how it'd been designed. But what I'm talking about now, with the basic philosophy of the camping program in mind, the next step was to deal with the physical plant. It was quite a challenge because they had a total capital budget of \$50,000, and that included the renovation of all the existing facilities. Remember that they were for boys, and we were now dealing with families. There was a great deal of conversion that had to be done and refinements that had to be made.

Additionally, I had to add thirty new tents to accommodate, we were talking about 125 people capacity. We built a tennis court, and we put in a couple of other play fields, volleyball

and badminton courts. And we had to get all the necessary equipment and supplies to run the camp. I spent most of that spring at camp doing a great deal of the maintenance work and all the light carpentry work, in order to save on the expenses.

LaBerge: Did you do that alone or did you get a crew?

Koll: It was me.

LaBerge: Just you? [laughter] Where did you stay? In one of the tents?

Koll: In the rec hall. There was a rec hall there, and I stayed in it. The tent cabins that we added and the tennis courts, I contracted those out. But the other things, all the things to do with general maintenance I did myself. As far as supplies were concerned, most of what we started off with were from surplus sources. I went to all the surplus stores and checked to see what they had. It was not too long after World War II, as you may recall, and there were a lot of surplus items. So all the beds and mattresses, the tents and kitchen equipment basically were secured secondhand from surplus stores. By doing that we were able to save substantial amounts of money, and we did open in June within our budget.

LaBerge: And did the budget include salaries for staff?

Koll: No, that was just for setting up the camp. But we built thirty tent platforms, and equipped the kitchen. It ran into a lot of money.

Staffing the camp was an additional challenge. We started off by hiring two former Camp McCoy staff members who were available; I wanted them to stay on because they were familiar with the camp's physical plant and also the area. They were Herb Holder and Chuck Klee. They headed up the maintenance crew and also assisted in the programming. The rest of the staff were primarily students from the Berkeley campus plus a couple of UC graduates who'd been out a short time.

Joe Jackson and the Buick

Koll: Joe Jackson was hired to be cook; he was a fraternity cook at the SAE house here on the campus. He was probably one of the better selections the I've made. For fifteen years he kept coming back to the camp and heading up our kitchen staff. In addition to



Joe Jackson, Camp Gold cook, 1949

being really a great cook, he was a fabulous person. I had a wonderful rapport with Joe.

He was included in one of the most heartwarming experiences I had in my total Lair experience. He was going to retire. He loved Buicks. A number of the campers and some of us on the staff got together, and we bought him a nice Buick convertible. At the campfire show, unknown to him, we drove it up with a big red ribbon on it and presented it to him, and he cried, and frankly, I did, too. It was such a touching experience. He said it was the greatest thing that ever happened to him in his life. And he said, "You know, I've always said if I worked hard, someday something great would happen to me." And it did. So it was very pleasing. He took it down to Oakland and parked it in front of his house, and left the ribbon on it so all his friends could see it.

LaBerge: Well, then in the kitchen, the rest of the staff, did they have kitchen experience?

Koll: No. He had an assistant cook that did. He hired another assistant cook, but the rest of them were people that we were able to get-- the pot washers and salad makers were not experienced. But under his leadership, they were able to do all right.

Staff Romances and Relationships

Koll: I might add that I hired to work in the dining hall a coed from Cal by the name of Jane Biedenbach, who was to play a very important positive role in my life. During the summer a romance developed between us, and on October 1, 1950, we were married, the following year.

LaBerge: We talked a little bit about that. So you started a new tradition, too--of romances.

Koll: That was the first romance, and since then there's been, I imagine, probably a hundred. Lots of staffers got married following a staff relationship. Among them are Bob and Marge Albo; I don't know if I gave you his name.¹

LaBerge: You gave me his name.

Koll: Yes, and Rick and Janet Cronk; Gary and Cab Rogers, some of the early ones who met at the Lair; and Dave and Ann Flinn. All

¹See Bob Albo's interview at p. 298.

through the years there's been two or three on almost every staff.

LaBerge: Now just in that vein, did you have certain guidelines or rules about, oh, fraternizing, drinking, I don't know.

Koll: We didn't.

LaBerge: But this all worked out so well. I mean, from outward appearances.

Koll: It has worked very well. We live so close that peer impact and influence is more important than a number of rules. I would say that the attitudes have become liberalized over the years. Things that probably we would not have tolerated in the early days are now just matter-of-fact. The camp manager lives very near, right in that staff area. I know in my early days I used to get up every once in while and make them quiet down when the parties got too loud.

But one rule we've had is no hard liquor in the camp area. They have beer, but no hard liquor. I'm sure that it has not always been followed, but it's a general, basic rule. But as far as general rules about getting together, dating, no, there were none.

One thing we started very early and was very important: every Saturday night the staff had a party. We'd have different staff members--we'd form the staff into committees, and they would put on the party. The important thing, as far as I was concerned, was to keep the staff in camp. If we didn't have a party on Saturday nights [members of] the staff were going to go out into the local areas, in the bars, and obviously there would be problems with it. By keeping them in camp and having them involved in their own parties--and we gave them a modest budget for party expenses--it worked over the years. There have been some great parties, a lot of imagination among the staff. They came up with some themes that are unbelievable. And the staff always looked forward to those Saturday night parties.

As far as getting the staff, we would announce that we were taking applications, and then there would be an interview process. For many years I conducted all the interviews, and later we added other members. But as long as I was actually involved in the management I insisted on having the final interview with the staff people. I felt that through the years I had a good idea of the type of person that would do well on the staff.

It definitely had to be someone who was people-oriented, who liked people and worked well with people. Because when you're up at camp during the summer months, not only in your staff living conditions--you're very involved with people. You have to be able to adjust to them, to be flexible, to enjoy them. It very quickly became a coveted position, and we had many more applications than what we were able to accommodate. We could be quite selective.

The Staff Shows

- Koll: Another qualification we were looking for was talent, not only in their particular activity but also as campfire entertainment. The staff is expected to put on a couple shows a week, and we asked everyone to be able to participate in some way or another in the staff shows. We had some very talented people, musical and entertaining, humorous, and many other talents. It's been a lot of fun seeing them put the programs together.
- LaBerge: How did that concept of the show come about? And how is it written?
- Koll: Friday night is the final night of the camp week, so we thought we should have some sort of a climax for each week. We have a program director who has the primary responsibility of putting on these programs. They write the script and direct the plays and skits. Over the years the shows became much more professional and entertaining. I think in this little book here [Campfire Tales: A History of the Lair of the Bear] there are a number of them that are listed. The staff would come up with a theme from a musical play and then change the words to relate to the Lair. Cal-Stanford rivalry plays an important role in all this.
- LaBerge: Now when you pick the program director, when does that person get his or her job?
- Koll: He'd get it, say, right about now. [January]
- LaBerge: So then they've got a good six months, maybe, to put something together?
- Koll: Yes.
- LaBerge: And then do they meet with you through the year to check it out?

Koll: Oh, yes, I would insist on it. I wanted to be sure it's not college humor. College humor sometimes is a little on the ragged edge. And also I might be able to help them with some of the plans. Yes, it's more--I wouldn't say censorship, but just to make sure it was something that was acceptable for family enjoyment. You're trying to have something that kids could relate to as well, because your campfire audience has a number of younger people.

You also try and have the director cast it, because you'd like to have the staff picked, oh, say by April. They would try and cast it before going up to camp. There would be some staff meetings here on the campus before camp, to get people acquainted and go over a number of the basic policies. Also to hand out parts for the show.

LaBerge: But would they practice before camp?

Koll: No, they would not, generally not. Unless there was something special. If you had a song, you'd probably get the words and you would work it out on your own. But as far as a group coming together, no. And that's always been a problem, because when you get up at camp there's so much to do just getting camp ready for opening. It's difficult to work in the practices which they need. Their first week at camp is a busy one, and the first week after camp opens is also very busy, getting things organized.

LaBerge: We've always gone the first week, which I guess is now called the second week. And they always laugh and they say, "You know, you're our guinea pigs." But even though it's the first time they put it on, it's so good.

Koll: Yes. They do quite well.

LaBerge: Even the mistakes are funny. I mean, that's sort of part of it.

Koll: That's right, you expect them. I think they handle it very well. I always admire the poise which they have. They'll make a blunder and they'll handle it. They'll laugh it off, "I blew that one," and then go on to the next part. Of course it's a great experience for them to have the opportunity to be in front of people, talking and entertaining people.

Influence on Children

LaBerge: It's a wonderful example for the kids, both to see them do that--to see them make the mistakes, even, and to see how they handle that, and that it's okay.

Koll: The point you make, the impact on children, is very important, and that's one thing we always stress to the staff: "Look, there are a hundred eyes watching you all the time. And what you do is going to have a great impact on those young people, and we expect you to be role models for them as much as possible."

I had one camper that came up to me--I've always remembered and chuckled about it. They had a young son who was about twelve years old, and he wasn't doing too well in school, and they were pushing him. He came to them one day and said, "Mom and Dad, I'm going to go back and study hard, get my grades so I can go to Cal. I want to work on the Lair staff. Someday, I want to be a dishwasher up here." [laughter] And I always chuckle about that, because obviously the dishwashing staff made a great impact on him, and that was his goal in life, to get his grades and go to Cal and then be a dishwasher at the Lair.

Children's Programs

LaBerge: How about if we talk about the kids' programs?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: How did you know how to develop that? I mean, at that point in your life you didn't have children. Did you have very much experience with children?

Koll: No, I did not. We knew we wanted to have a children's program. Actually, we started off with just a Kub Korral, and that was the name of the children's program. Fortunately, Herb Holder's wife was a teacher, and we gave her the job of starting the Kub Korral. She established it like a kindergarten or a pre-kindergarten place where a kid could be left. And as the years progressed, obviously, we have expanded the programs very, very substantially, both in facilities and activities. We have the small children in one area, three- and four-year-olds, five and six and down the line. We added staff members. But we started off with a total staff of only nineteen people, and so we were spread very thin. And in our original staff we had a Kub Korral

director and an assistant, we had a pool director, we had an athletic director, a naturalist, and then maintenance crews and dining hall crews.

LaBerge: So for the kids you just had two people, for the Kub Korral. You didn't have anything like pre-teens--?

Koll: That's right. We didn't have any of the teens or the pre-teen programs. They came later as people kept coming back and their kids kept getting older. They were losing interest in the Kub Korral, and finally we put on a special teen director. Parents were very concerned about their teens, keeping them involved in a safe environment. It was a special feature that we could provide, and it helped us a great deal in our attendance, because they kept coming back with their older children.

LaBerge: There are a lot of places teens don't want to go with you.

Koll: Exactly right. Teens must be with teens, and you want to have something that will attract a fairly large number so there are numbers to work with. But we realized that when talking about teens, there's a dramatic difference between the interests of a thirteen-year-old and an eighteen-year-old. So we had to split the teens down into two different groups in order to relate our programs to their interest.

LaBerge: Since I've been there, it's changed to old teens and young teens. It's been wonderful.

Koll: And we have the eight- and nine- year-olds and the six- and seven-year-olds, so we have all the age groups and we've put in staffing and programming for them.

LaBerge: So the first year with the Kub Korral, any child who was at camp went to the Kub Korral? Or they just did whatever else they wanted to--you know, played in the streams or did whatever?

Koll: Yes, it was open, yes. We did have a craft activity in conjunction with the Kub Korral. It did attract some of the older children who didn't care for the small child care.

LaBerge: And from the very beginning did you have trips to the lake for paddle boating and horseback riding?

Koll: The first year we had boats in the lake. It was a disaster.

LaBerge: You mean boats that belonged to the Lair?

Koll: Yes. And the main problem, people would steal them, and we had a director that was sort of isolated from the camp, and wasn't always on the job. And I was very concerned about the safety. The boats were rundown and we were liable. So it only lasted one year.

Horseback riding was a very important activity for many years. When we first moved up there, the stable was located right at the Y at Pinecrest, where the Forest Service building currently stands. It was Sardella's Stable. We had a great deal of riding. It was a great activity of the smaller children; they loved it.

One story I always remember. We came back one noon, and I was at a table, and this little girl came up to her parents saying, "Listen!"--just aglow--and she said, "Oh, Mommy, I had the most wonderful ride on a big, white stallion named Nellie." [laughter] It was a great activity and I was sorry to see that eventually we had to give it up because of insurance concerns. The insurance company refused to honor our policy unless we gave up the riding activities. Now they have it, but it's at the stables on top of Dodge Ridge. They offer it, but we do not sponsor it as a camp activity.

Fishing in the Stream

Koll: Another program that we started--it was great--fishing for the kids. It was a great opportunity for the kids to catch a trout. The stream, as I mentioned, runs right alongside the camp. We dammed it up and made a little pool right in the middle of the stream. Each week we would go down to the trout farm at Columbia and buy a couple hundred trout, and bring them to camp on Monday night and toss them in that little pool. Children, children twelve and under, could catch up to two per day. They would bring them to the kitchen and put their name on them and put them in the refrigerator, and the trout would be cooked and served to them.

It was a fascinating activity. They'd just flock there on Monday night and all the hooks would be flying. It was a miracle that no one ever got hooked. I was always afraid that someone was going to get a hook in the eye or in the face. The parents were there, and that was one of the biggest problems. It was supposed to be a children's program. The dad would start off with his son or daughter and pretty soon he would have the pole and the kid would be pushed aside, and we'd have to referee it.

I know one interesting story: I went to a cocktail party one night and a little boy came up to me and we were chatting with each other. He said, "You know, Daddy had a great experience the other morning. He got up early and went down to that little pond, and he came back with six trout." Dad almost died. [laughter] In fact, my favorite story is, I came down, there was a rock right on the edge of that pool. And there was a little boy sitting there fishing. He had a hook and line, but no bait. I sat with him and I said, "Do you know if you put some bait on that hook, you could probably catch another trout." He said, "Oh, no. I'm not going to put any bait on it. I got one. If I put bait on, I'll catch more and I've got to quit fishing. This way I can keep on fishing." [laughter]

LaBerge: He just wanted to sit there.

Koll: Sit there and fish. They had a lot of fun there; it was great. But eventually two things happened. The Fish and Game got more rigid on their rules. Actually, we were probably not supposed to dam the stream, but the old game warden thought it was a great program and he did not bother us. But we got younger wardens in, and they were looking at the book, and it stated that "you're not supposed to obstruct fish movement in the stream."

Also, locals from the camping grounds learned there were fish in our pond, and they would come over and catch the planted trout. And they said, "Well you can't stop us; it's a public stream." We had a few hassles with them and finally we just had to give it up. We couldn't afford to provide trout for the whole campground and it got to be more of a problem than we could handle. But it was unfortunate, because it was a great experience. Even for the fathers, because their kids wanted to catch trout, they'd have to go to the lake, and it was difficult and they probably wouldn't succeed. But at the pond right in camp they were almost certain to catch their first fish.

LaBerge: Well, is that when the fishing trips to the lake began, when you had to give those up?

Koll: Yes, right. I used to take one each week. On my day off I would take a group into the backcountry. We'd get up early in the morning, get on a horse and ride, oh, six, seven, eight, ten miles, and fish. There was some great trout fishing. A lot of people came back awfully tired and sore. They were not used to horseback riding. But it was a great opportunity; I enjoyed it. I was always accused of having a special fishing pond because I would leave everybody and hike off about half a mile; I wanted to be alone. And I had fished more and had better equipment, and I

usually caught a limit. They probably weren't as successful. They felt I had a secret pond that I was fishing.

LaBerge: Well, you must have fished a lot when you were growing up in Wisconsin.

Koll: We lived right on a lake and we fished all the time.

LaBerge: What did you get? Pickerel and sunfish?

Koll: Blackbass, pickerel and sunfish were the main fish that we caught. We used to ice fish in the wintertime.

LaBerge: Cut the little hole and--.

Koll: That's right.

LaBerge: What else about the kids' programs? As far as the expansion, I guess that the next year you'd have to add more staff and--.

First Year's Financial Success

Koll: Yes. When the camp grew--as you mentioned, we started off with 125 capacity. And I might add, we were very fortunate. The first year we were in the black, made money, and we've managed to be successful every year since.

LaBerge: So did you make money the first year?

Koll: Just slightly. We just had a few dollars over budget and it was encouraging, and from then on it started generating substantially more.

LaBerge: From what I read, the Lair contributes quite a bit of the Alumni's budget now.

Koll: Yes. Each year it increased, and right now--this last year--they had the best year ever; they produced almost one half million dollars net income. And going back to the original concept, that we had to pay off all the monies advanced and the interest, we did. Within ten years the Lair was totally paid off and free and was making extra monies for the Association, and has been doing it ever since, substantial monies. Very quickly we were up in the two hundred thousand dollar net income for the Lair, and then it's gone all the way up to half a million. You're right; it's one of the principal income sources for the Alumni Association.

LaBerge: Earmarked for certain activities?

Koll: It goes into the general fund.

LaBerge: It's wonderful, particularly when that wasn't the aim of the program.

Koll: Not at all. The idea was, hopefully it'd break even. I think at the end, probably, we ought to spend a little time on what the Lair has done, its greatest strengths, and what it has contributed, both financially and in public relations, recruitment, and the opportunities for faculty and alumni to meet. I thought we'd do that probably at the end.

LaBerge: That's a good idea.

Koll: On the first staff we had an interesting personality, Jim Cullom, who was a famous football player here at Cal, and his wife, Marty. They added a lot.

LaBerge: They both worked there?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Was he athletic director? Or what was his position?

Friday Softball Games

Koll: Yes, he was athletic director. He had to leave early to go down to football practice, as I remember. He was a great humorist and added a lot to the first year at camp. One of the big activities was the Friday softball game, and it started in the very beginning of the Lair. On Friday the campers would play the staff. I must confess that in selecting the staff, I gave a special preference to men who had athletic ability. We usually had some very good athletes. For years the staff dominated those softball games. But it was a lot of fun.

As we got down the road, they [the campers] used to import special pitchers to come up for the game, attempting to beat the staff. Sometimes they did, and it was a great camper celebration. We had a lot of fun in those games. We were using a fast pitch, so the scores were very low. We had some good players like John and Rupe Rickson and Bob Albo and Mike White.

LaBerge: At first was it just a men's game?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And when did you add the women's?

Koll: Oh, after a few years. Women's sports became more active, and women's softball was added. Later on, when we had the teen programs, the pre-teens and teens played. And when we had the two camps, it was a natural. In fact, it was a lot better when the game was between the two camps. It was more of an even rivalry. Now the staff still plays the campers, but it's usually of less importance.

LaBerge: It's sort of a practice game in the beginning of the week.

Koll: That's right. It's usually pretty one-sided.

Expansion to Camp Blue, 1956-1957

LaBerge: Do you want to say something about picking out the site for the other camp, in the expansion?

Koll: Yes. As we went along, the interest in the camp kept growing, so we kept expanding. We added tents each year, not always with formal approval. The camp kept expanding and we finally reached a capacity of about 250. And we had a waiting list of several thousand. There was a great deal of pressure at that point to expand.

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LaBerge: You were talking about expanding to another camp.

Koll: Yes. Our first thought was that we ought to find something in the southern part of the state, because the Pinecrest Lair would serve the northern area. I spent one off-season just looking at potential sites. I traveled quite a bit in the south looking at the sites. They simply did not have the same appeal that the northern sites had in vegetation and location. The availability of substantial sites was also very limited, and the cost of setting up the camp would be substantial. We kept looking all over, and in fact, I must have looked at fifteen to twenty sites, and none of them really duplicated what we had at Camp Gold.

I started to think, "Perhaps we ought to do something in the area." And we were fortunate; just adjacent to the site at Camp Gold was some unoccupied land that had potential for a campsite.

The only problem, in the middle of it was a man who had filed a mining claim. That was a common practice along the Sonora Pass highway. People would file mining claims based on gravel, which was really a phony claim, but they would eventually acquire title to it, and build a house. This was the intention of the man with the claim. The Forest Service had tried to get him off but couldn't.

Problem was, if they took him to court they could prove it wasn't a viable mining site, but if they got him off in the morning, he could file again in the afternoon and they'd have to go through the proceedings again. So they finally just gave up. But they told me that if I could get him off, they would give us the area. I met with the man and eventually, for twenty-five hundred dollars, we got him to give up the mining claim.

We also had to have access to the main highway. There was a man from the Lawrence Laboratory who had a mining claim where the road should go. So I met with him, took him up there and showed him what we had in mind. The fellow was impressed. He looked it over and said, "Look. You're going to get a lot more use out of it than I ever could. It's yours." He gave it to us without any financial consideration. He did not want to be recognized; it was just a generous gesture on his part.

LaBerge: What was his name? Or did he want to be anonymous?

Koll: Just wanted to be anonymous. I can't remember the name of the fellow on the other mining claim, either. Well, we got the site and the Forest Service then gave us the permit. It was an interesting challenge to develop it. I would go down there and sit for an hour or two at a time and just look at the site, try to study it, thinking what we had at Gold, and what the natural arrangements should be on the new location.

Finally I started to stake out areas, where the kitchen should be and where the lodge should be and the swimming pools and the tent area. Then I drew up the plans for all the buildings except the lodge. Well, they were pretty elementary buildings, as you know, but the main thing is the structural strength.

Members of the camp committee felt they should get an architect to do the lodge. Also they went to the engineering department here at Cal and convinced them to take on as a project the structural design. The first year, the lodge went down. They had not designed it properly.

LaBerge: This is because of snow?

Koll: Snow. It was built for 45 pounds per square foot, and normally you built for 175 to 200 pounds in the mountains. We hired a good mountain contractor who built an excellent lodge for us at Camp Blue.

It was in '57, when we started the work on the new camp. It was almost frightening when the contractor started to cut the trees in the area and put up buildings. I was hoping it would all come together in the logical manner.

I am pleased with the way it developed. The idea was to bring in the people from the highway. The first place they would go to is the office. You wanted it so when the trucks came to camp they would not go through the main part of camp, but directly to the kitchen, able to come and go freely. I felt that the main recreational activity should be in the center; including the lodge, swimming pools, and courts. The tent area is located in a half-circle around that central area of recreation. That's the way it was designed and built. I think the concept has lent itself rather well to the camp program.

LaBerge: So when Camp Blue was built, did you move over to Camp Blue and live there?

Koll: Yes, I moved over. I thought it was important. I had been at Camp Gold all those previous years. I was the manager at Gold from 1949 to 1956, and when we built Camp Blue, we hired managers for each camp. [In 1957, Bob Albo was manager at Camp Gold, Art Gallon at Camp Blue.]

LaBerge: But you were there, kind of overseeing everything.

Koll: I was overseeing everything. But I felt I should go to the new camp, and not be totally associated with Camp Gold, because everybody kept asking me, "Well what camp are you going to be at? Which one is the better camp?" And it's been a question all through the years, and I always said that each had special advantages and disadvantages. Going over, I took Joe Jackson, the head cook, to give the new camp some stature. And very generously and graciously, a number of the old campers went to Blue, just to give it a thrust of continuity from the previous years. Included were the Tucks and the Blues and a number of others.

Sources of Ideas

[Interview 4: January 16, 1992]##

LaBerge: I thought today we would talk a little more about the Lair and fill in parts that we've missed. One of the things about the program you once mentioned but didn't go into detail, was the influences you had from people from the Berkeley camps and the YMCA, as far as how you developed your program.

Koll: The YMCA did not play a particularly important role in the development of the program. The people from the YMCA were more of assistance with the physical plant, and helped us in understanding the rather unusual water supply systems, and the general maintenance of the grounds. As far as the Berkeley camps, it wasn't so much the program; they helped in the operational--the purchase of supplies, the problems of the winter storms and the winter snows and how you handle them, and a little on the staff recruiting.

Actually, the program came from within, and it was primarily trial and error the first year. A group of us got together, some of the senior staff members that I hired, and we outlined a program which we thought would be good. Fortunately, we were basically on key, and there have not been many basic changes. There have been a lot of improvements, a lot of additions, but the basic philosophies and different ideas that we had at the start--in other words, a very active program, lots of activities for every member of the family, but on a voluntary basis. And I must say my influence and interest in athletics played an important role, because we had all the athletic games and contests and tournaments. The idea of the campfire show and the campers' show was a way of getting everyone involved in the programming. But those were the major activities that we had. As we went along throughout the years, additional program activities have been added to the schedule.

LaBerge: I know on the evaluations the question always is, "What else would you like to see?" or "What would you like to see deleted?" And one year, for instance, there was aerobics. I think it was just for a year, and it probably didn't go over so well.

Koll: It didn't go over very well, no. I sometimes thought we would have exercises early in the morning. Particularly the women were interested in them. We find that a number of people who come up for vacation just don't want to get up early. There are a few that do and like to jog early in the mornings. So you keep that in mind and keep it at a low key, but make those things available. I think the greatest additions have been in the

children's programs. When we started out the first year, basically all we had was a Kub Korral for the small kids. Then we started in adding special programs for the different age groups. We had added for the fives and sixes, and the sevens and eights, and then the nines and tens, and the preteens and the teens. And as our camp grew, the activities expanded.

We also added pottery; it became quite popular, and our nature program was expanded. We had several more hikes during the week. One thing we discontinued was trying to run an aquatic program at the lake with boats and water activities. People still do it, but on their own. We found the camp was not in a position to carry on those activities.

Arts and Crafts: Music: Chapel

LaBerge: Well, the first year as far as arts and crafts, what did you have?

Koll: We had just the weaving, the braiding, and we then added copper jewelry. Those were the principal ones when we started out.

LaBerge: And for instance, that first year, did you have an art director?

Koll: That was in the Kub Korral, and they incorporated that into their programming. So it wasn't very extensive; we only had two people in the Kub Korral, they took care of the children and the crafts as well. But the very small children, the fours and fives, liked to do the braiding and the lanyards.

LaBerge: So then pottery and the potter's wheel were added later.

Koll: Yes, we finally got our own kilns and really, a quite extensive program.

LaBerge: People love that; I mean, they're just flocking over to that area.

Koll: They do. We used to have music, and that dropped by the wayside. Our music director would actually give lessons, and we found for a while the guitar was the big thing.

One program that isn't as extensive but is still carried out is a chapel service. Each chapel is located along the stream in a very, I think, impressive setting. In fact I must say that I get a greater inspiration sitting in that chapel than in the more

elaborate churches that I have attended. In the early years I think the students put more effort into their talks, and we had some magnificent inspirational talks coming from our staff. Today they still have them, but it's more of an individual thought process, where you come to a very pleasant setting, and you have a reading and you generate your own thoughts and ideas. It seems to be more popular today than it was years ago. But nevertheless, I think it's a very fine program, and I'd like to see it expanded.

LaBerge: I think so, too. We've always gone, and each year, there are more people who come. But you know, one of the wonderful things is that it is nondenominational.

Koll: That is correct. That's important. But as I say, it's very inspirational to sit there and hear the stream bubbling by and look at the trees, and a butterfly goes by, and the flowers around you. And somehow there is a feeling there is a Supreme Being, whoever that may be in your own belief, but there is something special about it, and it's very inspirational. It gives you time to think a bit about your own life, about your family, in a wonderful, serene environment.

LaBerge: You know, I've always been impressed, too, by the students who run it, because that's not an easy thing to do for an adult, to get up there and talk about spiritual things. And I think they do a wonderful job.

Koll: They open themselves, and that's marvelous. I agree with you; it's tremendous. The music and the songs and everything there just add to the whole thing.

LaBerge: So has that been going on since the beginning?

Koll: Day one, yes. Earlier, we used to bring in a visiting minister from the area to deliver the message, it was all right, but this has been far more impressive; it fits the camp scene and the feeling of the campers and the staff.

Adding to the Athletic Program

LaBerge: And as far as athletics, what have you added since that first year?

Koll: Well, the first year we had one tennis court, and we had a dirt floor, or a dirt volleyball court, a couple of horseshoe pits,

and that was basically it. But since then we've added--at each camp we have three tennis courts, we have surface volleyball, we have the paddle tennis, we have the surfaced badminton-shuffleboard courts. We also then have golf. They actually have some instruction and play once a week. Fishing trips have been incorporated into the program.

LaBerge: How about buying the equipment for athletics? How involved is that?

Koll: Well, we used to go to a sporting goods store here on Telegraph Avenue--Jim Davis--we got special discounts. But now there's a supplier in Stockton where almost all their equipment is purchased at a reduced rate.

LaBerge: For the longest time, people just left the equipment out and you just went and used it. It seems now there's a little bit--oh, you have to go check out the ping-pong paddles now. Either it's just because the world is a little bit different, or sometime the badminton birdies disappear, or the shuffleboard--whatever those things are called--disappear, or they get broken or something.

Koll: Yes, the discs for the shuffleboard. I think a couple of things. Number one, they're used more, and the cost went up appreciatively. And there was a disregard for the equipment. Smaller children would get a hold of it and break it and some people were not very careful with it. But there's been an attempt to put a control on it. I think one of the problems that we have is we're near the public campgrounds, and baseball equipment left out on the field almost always disappeared; people were coming over from the campground. In general, there has been an attempt to cut the cost.

LaBerge: Even so, it's amazing that people could just go and use it; there aren't usually fights about waiting. It works very well.

Koll: Oh yes, I think it's excellent. Over the years I think there has been a spirit of people feeling that the Lair is theirs, it's part of them, and so they want to take care of it, and they want to protect it. The idea of losing things in your tent, no tent has a key or lock; it's open. And people leave valuables there, and we've had, remarkably, money found on the ground turned in, watches, rings, and very seldom have we had any thefts.

And the occasions that we did, we were able to eventually track them down and find they came from outside the camp; they weren't campers. They were coming in and were aware of our bell system; when everybody went to dinner or to lunch, a couple of them would come in and then would ransack a tent or two and get

some valuables out of it. So the spirit has been absolutely unbelievable for an operation such as the Lair.

Early Influences

LaBerge: Now I have a couple of names that you've mentioned just in passing. Pauline Foster. Was she a program director?

Koll: She was a program director the first two years. She graduated from Cal, and then worked in recreation in San Francisco. She was able to bring a number of good program ideas to the Lair with her.

LaBerge: How about Emery Curtice from Echo Lake?

Koll: Emery Curtice was the camp manager of Echo. He'd been the principal of Berkeley High School, and I must add, a very close friend of mine. We've hunted together now for over twenty years. But he had a good knowledge of both the Alumni Association--having been on their board of directors--and also the camping operation. And he was very helpful in talking about the programming. In fact just last Friday I visited him, and he mentioned the Lair. I've mentioned that he'd been asked to manage it and turned it down. He felt one of the great success stories was the success of the Lair.

LaBerge: And Bill Rhodes.

Koll: Bill Rhodes was the manager of Berkeley Tuolumne camp. He'd been a manager for many years and had been very successful. Had a great following among Berkeley residents. I visited his camp a couple of times, and particularly in the internal management he was very helpful, about buying supplies and storing them, taking care of and getting equipment and programming.

LaBerge: You know, one of the amazing things is when you're up there, you're on vacation and so enjoying it that you forget all those details that have to go into it. People are taking care of you by having the food there--.

Koll: I think that you're right, and that's been a philosophy, certainly of mine, that any problem we have should never surface so that the campers are aware of it. They're not there to share our problems and concerns, they're there to enjoy a carefree vacation. And obviously in an operation of that magnitude, there are going to be a lot of little problems. But the idea is for

them not to surface, to handle them internally in a manner that doesn't interfere with the pleasure of the campers.

Operational Problems

LaBerge: Can you think offhand of problems that crept up?

Koll: Well, let me tell you about an operational problem. In 1955, I woke up one morning to hear a popping--or was it in the middle of the night?--popping noises. And we looked out, and it was bright out--the kitchen was on fire. That was in about the third week of the camping season. We rushed out and the whole kitchen was totally in flames. We got the fire department over, and we were able to save the dining hall, but the kitchen was a total loss and so were the trees around it. Apparently there had been some electrical shortage and somehow it'd caught on fire.

So what do you do in the middle of the season with a camp full of campers? We met at midnight at the campfire circle. They said, "Well, do we have to go home?" I said, "No, we're going to continue operations. Stay with us and we'll work it out." So the cook, Joe Jackson, and I went over and got the storekeeper at Pinecrest out of bed, and practically bought out the store.

Then we went up to Pinecrest Chalet Lodge, which is up the road--it was run then by Wilbert Twining--and we made a deal with him that we would use his chalet for breakfast and dinner. We would furnish the cooks and the food, but use their facilities. And we made bag lunches for everybody at noon. We didn't miss a single meal. In a week and a half we had a new temporary kitchen built. I went down to the Bay Area and bought a lot of used equipment and supplies, and we were back in operation in our own kitchen within two weeks. It was really a challenging experience.

LaBerge: I'm sure it was.

Koll: Another management problem we've had for many years was in regard to our septic tanks. We started out with chemical toilets, which were an absolute disaster. I finally at the end of one year talked the Forest Service into allowing us to install flush toilets. Those were the first flush toilets in the area.

But when we had flush toilets we had to put in septic tanks and leaching fields. And they were a continual problem. Toward

the middle and latter part of the season the ground would be saturated and we'd start to have sewage breaking out. Then we'd have to patch and drop loads of gravel on top of it and try to just stagger through the rest of the season. We finally brought in microform units, supposedly to treat the sewage, and the odor from that was--with the wind it was sometimes unbearable. But it was an ongoing problem.

Finally the idea emerged to have a treatment plant for all of Pinecrest. We were one of the leaders in it, and we were very fortunate, because the decision was to be made on acreage. And with our lease, we had one-third of the total acreage in the Pinecrest area. So our vote was very important. We were very influential in getting the plant installed, and it solved a major problem for us.

Forest Service Regulations

Koll: Another problem was the constant turnover in the Forest Service. Each head ranger would have their own agenda. They would go through all the leases and check them out, and usually had some new regulations that they wanted to enforce. Over the years they had an opportunity to know us, and didn't always go by the book; they gave us some latitude.

A couple of things that they wanted. One, they wanted us to clear thirty feet around each tent cabin, totally down to the gravel. Well, that would have made it a barren camp, and I would stall them. Finally we got it waived. The other thing, they wanted us to move all the facilities back away from the stream about thirty yards. Well, that included our kitchen and a number of our permanent facilities and a number of tents. Finally by working with them and stalling we were able to work out a few compromises; we moved a few back. But it was always a concern when we had a new district ranger what his attitude would be.

LaBerge: Was the reasoning for those kind of regulations fire?

Koll: Primarily fire. Public access to the stream was the reason to move the facilities back. It's still on their books as a regulation. But allowances should be made for the setting which is involved. In fact the State Department came out once and told us we had to put heaters in all the tent cabins, because the temperature was below code, particularly for the staff. And again, that's not reasonable.

We always tried to be cooperative, but also had the Lair in mind and tried to protect it. We've lost several buildings to snow over the years, and that's always been a challenge, to rebuild in time for the opening. One year the Gold kitchen went down in April, and it was almost impossible to try and get it rebuilt if we went through all the regulations. We would have to have plans drawn and approved. I figured we had to gamble, so we just brought in a contractor and we started to build.

LaBerge: You mean without a permit?

Koll: Yes, just on our own. We had our own design and--. I'm sure the Forest Service people had to know something was going on, because of all the lumber coming in. They didn't say anything, I didn't say anything, and we got it up a week before camp opened. There were a few sleepless nights toward the end, but we made it.

LaBerge: After it was built, then did you go get a permit?

Koll: Never. To this day we've not mentioned the fact the kitchen was rebuilt. If it came to their attention, they would have had to act on it, and they would have had to stop us. But if it didn't come to their attention they could always plead that they were unaware of it. And I think they understood what it was all about.

Rainy Days and the Vista Lodge

LaBerge: What about bad weather during camp?

Koll: The Lair is not designed for an extended wet, cold, rainy period. We've had them, and they're always a problem. You hope it's only a day or two and you can survive it. We do have programming for bad weather. We bring people into the lodges and into the dining hall, particularly the children, and have movies, play them forwards and backwards and you have games and all kinds of things that keep them occupied. And we served hot coffee and chocolate throughout the day and do everything we could to keep people interested in other things than the weather and the fact that their tent may be leaking a little bit and that it's cold and wet.

But I must say, after a couple of days, it's very difficult. We now buy polyethylene covers for the tents. It's been very helpful, and has saved a lot of campers from going home, because previously, after a day of rain the canvas started to leak. But

with a poly covering, it does not leak. If people have a dry place to sleep, they probably will stay with you. Since we built the Vista Lodge, it's another building which we can use for special programming.

LaBerge: Do you want to say something about the Vista Lodge and just how you came to that decision, and what it is?

Koll: The area between Camp Gold and Camp Blue is a rocky point. Camp McCoy used it for a rifle range and for initiation rites. It is surrounded by rocks, and it is on a little cliff, and is wooded. I always thought something special should be done with that area. To me, it was one of the more enchanting areas of the whole campsite. And so I kept thinking about it, and didn't want to waste it or use it for something that wasn't really a good addition. And so when I was executive manager, I gave it some more thought. I thought that's one contribution I could make before I left the management of the Lair.

I was concerned, because the two lodges had basically been taken over by the children's activities. It wasn't a place where adults could sit down and read, write letters, or relax, or in the morning sleep in a little late and have coffee in a very quiet and inspiring setting. I thought we ought to build a lodge up there, and keep it for adults, where they can go and have their own lodge, and do some of the things they enjoy. We had built up a substantial reserve, we called it a major capital expenditure reserve. We went ahead and arranged for a design for a lodge by one of our alumni and a camp committee member, and went ahead and built it.

There were some people who were not in favor of it, they thought if we were going to build, it should be down in the center of camp. But my idea was that we needed something away from the center of camp, to provide an additional facility. It turned out very well, and it's used by many. It is used for special events, particularly for faculty members. After their talk at the campfire there is a seminar at the Vista Lodge, where people can come and ask questions. Every morning there is coffee there and rolls. If you sleep in and miss the regular breakfast you can go up there. They have papers available. It's a chance to get away. To me, it's an inspiring spot to sit and enjoy the scenery; that's why I called it the Vista Lodge. You look all over the valley, the trees, you're out by yourself, and the birds and deer come by, and you get a chance to appreciate the beauty of the area.

Staff Party

Koll: I think it's been a fine addition to the Lair. I would like to see it used even more in programming. I think there is still an opportunity for additional programs in the area. I might add, the staff uses it every Saturday night for their staff parties. That was important, because they were using the teen lodge, which was near the middle of camp. And as you might imagine, staff parties get a little loud, and it disrupted the sleeping of a number of people. Up there it's been much less of a problem for the campers; because of the distance they hear very little of the noise.

LaBerge: So is the staff party for both camps?

Koll: Yes, the staff party is for both camps. It's a chance to bring the two staffs together. Of course I mentioned the philosophy of it is to keep the staff present in camp. And camps take turns in putting on the party. They have committees. Camp Gold will have about five committees, and Camp Blue will have about five committees.

Then the final staff party is always put on by the management, and it's a very special party. They pick a theme and then go all out to make it a tribute to the great job the staff has done. Over the years we've had award presentations at that final staff party. They are voted by the staff. They've changed a bit over the years. First, it used to be disturbing to some of the members; the awards included the laziest, the messiest, the hardest worker and the neatest. And the best public relations and so on. Over the years some of the staff were offended by it, so they have moderated it.

They still give awards, but they're not as critical as they were in the earlier stages. The staff really looks forward to those awards, and they're very important, particularly those of the hardest worker, best public relations, most valuable staff member--both men and women. And this is really a tribute, when your co-workers honor you.

LaBerge: Are the awards those little trophies? Or something else?

Koll: No, these are just certificates. It's not so much the physical award as the actual recognition that goes with it.

Job Evaluations and Recommendations

LaBerge: On that same note, it seems that more often the staff members are looking for jobs through the summer. Do you think that the Lair helps them find careers?

Koll: There isn't any question about it. A number of staff members have been approached by alumni and invited to apply for a position. And it gives the staff, I think, a chance to get a better sense of their own abilities. Because it's a challenging job, much more challenging, I think, than any of the casual campers realize. But it's an opportunity as well. And many staff really develop their own personalities, their own abilities, while there.

I might add that over the years I have written hundreds of recommendations for staff members, for jobs, for grad school. The Lair is probably their first and only job to date, and they come to us for a recommendation. I must say that people give quite a bit of credence to the job recommendations that we give. In fact just yesterday I wrote a recommendation for one of my former staffers, who's applying for grad school in the public health department.

LaBerge: Of course, you notice the staff who are talented in the shows and stuff, but you also notice, oh, a particular nature director who's very good at public relations and smoothing things over, or just open to new ideas and willing to take a new trip, or something like that. You do get to know them well.

Koll: That's right, because they're willing to extend themselves. Something that I've always watched is their ability to accept responsibility, or their willingness to accept additional assignments. The first couple of weeks is fine, but what about the tenth, eleventh week. Are they still there on time? Are they still there with the same enthusiasm? Every Friday night we always had a staff meeting and went over that week. It provided a great opportunity to talk about problems that we had or weaknesses, or the strengths or particular outstanding performance.

Something that I did that I thought was helpful: the fourth week of camp I called in each staff member individually and talked to them about their performance to date. Something we have to recognize, I mentioned it a minute ago, is this is their first job. Many of them weren't aware if they're performing up to an expected level. I always started those off with a positive note, by telling, "You know, I'm really impressed by what you're

doing in this area." And then I would work over to something that I really wanted to talk about, "You know, there's another area which we could perhaps talk about and improve. What are your thoughts on it?" That way we could help them and improve their performance in a manner that was very constructive.

LaBerge: So does that still continue today?

Koll: Yes, it does.

LaBerge: That's a great idea, too, I think, in the middle of camp, when people are losing enthusiasm, how to keep it up.

Koll: They know that at the end of each year, they are evaluated. And based on that evaluation, they are invited back for the following year. Staff members are not invited back automatically, and they know it. If they're not performing up to an acceptable level, you can say, "You know, you really have to pick it up a little bit. We'd like to have you back next year but we expect you to do better work." We guide them along the way.

LaBerge: Do you have any anecdotes on particular staff people?

The County Assessor and Bob Albo

Koll: Yes. To talk about staff members and managers, we've had some great people. At Gold, the most outstanding was Bob Albo. When he became camp manager, he was the greatest P.R. [public relations] person in the world. He knew the names of every camper and all the children. It was like a pied piper when he walked through camp, all the children would follow him. Well, one day a man arrived at camp and said he'd like to take a tour of the camp. Bob stepped forward and said, "Well, let me take you." And he started telling him about the wonderful camp, how much we'd spent on the buildings and facilities. The man was absorbing every word of it. In fact, Bob noticed he was taking notes, and so he really turned on. He probably even exaggerated a little bit. And after they finished the total tour, the man shook his head and said--

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Koll: He was the county assessor. Our taxes doubled the following year. Bob and I have always laughed about it. He still remembers it very clearly.

Recruiting and Interviewing Staff

LaBerge: Well, have there been any major problems in staffing that you've encountered that you want to pass on?

Koll: I don't think we've had major problems, but I think perhaps they're doing a better job today. Originally, I would interview and make a decision. Now they've added a committee of former staffers who interview the applicants and make decisions, and the director and managers are not that actively involved.

I think one of the major problems we've had is trying to get minorities on our staff. There's been great pressure, as you might imagine, from both the University and alumni. Why aren't there more minority campers and staffers? We made a concerted effort when a minority family attended, to be certain they've been treated very well. And I don't think we've ever had a complaint from any of them. But somehow, it just hasn't attracted large numbers, for many reasons.

As far as the staff, we've spread the word and interviewed potential candidates, and we've hired a number of them. But usually, before they come to camp they're offered better jobs. The money is very important to them. The Lair cannot pay competitive salaries with corporations, with industry. They go where they can make the most money. I think that's been the greatest concern we have. Today, I know they're still doing exactly the same thing. They advertise, they publish in all the different areas where they think they might attract minority staff members, and they've always had a few, but never in the numbers in which they would like.

LaBerge: So today it's done much more by committee? The interviewing.

Koll: Much more by committee, yes.

LaBerge: Is the committee volunteer? Or are they paid members?

Koll: Oh, yes, it's volunteers. Former staff members or campers who have had a long history with the Lair, and understanding the responsibilities and requirements of a staff member. And I think it's a better base than what I had when I was doing it. It's a broader view and perhaps it brings a more diversified staff to the camp.

LaBerge: How would you get the committee of volunteers? Do you get them here or do you call them?

Koll: You call them. You know the people who really were good, solid staff people, who have had a continuing interest in the Lair and are in the area, who would be available and you think would be interested. You call them and then you set up your interview periods and then ask them if they can make them, and give them a schedule. You have one of your staff people do most of the legwork and also be present to direct questions. There's a written resume that applicants fill out before they come, and the first screening is based on the resume. There are some people who obviously do not meet the general requirements for staff, so they are eliminated. There is a very substantial number that are personally interviewed. And usually, you have a second interview before making the final selection.

Staff Duties

LaBerge: Could you say something about requirements for staff, duties maybe, that aren't obvious? I mean, I'm thinking the art director does do the art. But what is their responsibility on their day off? Or if they're a floater? Or if somebody gets sick?

Koll: Yes. We do have a floater, the position was added after a number of years. At first we didn't; everybody would fill in. But we found that each week there were different numbers of young people, children, in different groups. And sometimes you'll have twice as many in a certain age group as you had previously. The floater is made available to that particular group to cover the staffing needs. If you have a sickness, then the floater can fill in.

Also, every staff member is expected to fill in for another staff member on their day off. The day-off arrangement is that staff can leave after two o'clock in the afternoon, on the day prior to your official day off. Any staff members having evening obligations need someone to fill in for them. That's expected of the staff members. There is also camp cleanup where all the staff members are expected to participate. Of course, the shows--that's obvious--every staff member must be willing to participate in the show.

Their assignment depends on their particular ability and talents. We've also insisted that they be available for the full season. We found that if you have a changeover in the middle of the season--and sometimes it happens unavoidably--there's a letdown. The new person doesn't quite capture the spirit. The

staff come together as a unit, and they have a spirit, a staff feeling, a belonging, and a new person has a very difficult time becoming part of it. The camp suffers when you have substantial changes in the middle of the summer.

We had very few staff members that we've had to dismiss. Two or three over all the years that we've been in operation. I think it is really remarkable. Obviously we were concerned about drugs for a number of years: we do not tolerate it. Any staff member caught with drugs in possession or under the influence will be fired on the spot. There is no second chance; there is no debate.

Drinking at the Lair

Koll: Drinking has been a problem. It always will be with the young people. We've tried hard to control it. Hard liquor is not allowed in the staff area; we keep it out of the staff parties. Beer, however, is allowed, and then sometimes it's been excessive. But management is working on it. They're trying to control it. The biggest problem with drinking has been with the teens.

LaBerge: I think you're right.

Koll: The problem is, we find that parents are at times the problem. They'll make it available for the teens, and then we have to deal with the problems that develop. It has been the major problem in drinking. It's on the campus, it's all through society. It isn't just something that is centered at the Lair.

LaBerge: Now in a case like that, do you approach parents? Or how do you handle that? That's a very delicate--.

Koll: We have to go the parents and say we're going to send their teens down the hill unless they change their ways. As I mentioned earlier, we'll not allow teens to come up without parental supervision. And same way as noisemakers, you have to talk to them. One case we had, food was being thrown in the dining hall, which is not allowed. They threw a pie in the face of our manager, and I happened to be present, so I walked over and they were going to throw food at me. I said, "No way." Fortunately, they didn't, but we did not allow that couple to come back to the camp. It's too disruptive for the rest of the people.

LaBerge: These were adults, who were throwing--.

Koll: These were adults. They'd had too much at their cocktail party, and they weren't able to control it. The word had to spread, and it did, and food throwing stopped right there. But that's very unusual. As I mentioned, the 5:30 dinner has really solved most of our drinking problems. People don't start cocktails until 5:00, and by 5:30 they have to go to dinner, and they have had only one or two at the most. That's important. This is a family camp, and you don't want that sort of thing to distract from the general environment.

LaBerge: Well then after dinner there isn't time because there are athletic events and everything.

Koll: That's right. There are activities that come into play. Very seldom do people ever go back after dinner and resume a cocktail party. And with a full, active day, most people go to bed early.

Nighttime Activities

LaBerge: That's right! Well, let's talk about some of the night activities. The first year, what did you start out with? Did you have bingo? Did you have something like a dance one night?

Koll: We did. Bingo's been from day one. It's one of my least favorite activities, but people love it.

LaBerge: People do; it's amazing.

Koll: So, we've always had it. We used to have more dancing. We had folk dancing and social dancing. They were quite popular. We used to have costume parties, and we had more camper activities. And somehow over the years they've lost their appeal, and so we dropped them. We're doing more now with the hootenanny shows. They've been quite good, a musical show put on by the staff and campers.

Of course, we have Camper Night, it's primarily for parents to adore their children performing on the stage. But it's a wonderful thing; it's a family camp. It gives the children a definite role. Their staff member works with them putting on a skit or a song. It gives them something to do. It is very popular with the campers. People there, almost everybody has children, so it's all right. If they were without children it wouldn't have a great appeal. It's not professional, it's certainly amateurish with the small children, but it's a very important part of the camp.

The final campfire show and the presentation of the awards for the tournaments is a big event for the campers. In the tournaments, it's interesting the intensity in which many people participate and how important the awards are. And they're just little two- or three-inch trophies, but they treasure them as if it were some big, gold, fifty-dollar trophy. It's a wonderful part of the program, and it gives a number of young people a chance to take a bow; it's important, I think, both for the family environment and also for their individual development.

LaBerge: How about speaker night? Have you always had that?

Koll: Yes. We've always had faculty members present. The invitation is coveted by the faculty.

LaBerge: I wondered if it was difficult to find people.

Koll: No. Those who have attended want to return. Also, faculty who have not been invited are aware of the speaker program. When you invite people, number one, they have to have a message of general interest. Number two, it has to be someone who would enjoy the environment. Number three, we try to get someone who would enjoy being with the campers. And to me, that's been one of the great benefits, getting the faculty and administration up there, a chance to meet alumni in what I call a "shirt-sleeve environment," just talk about the University. It personalizes the University.

Once you've been away from the University, the faculty members you've known have disappeared and you view the campus more as buildings rather than personalities. But once you meet some of the faculty, get to know them personally, as you do in that informal environment, the University has a whole new appeal. There is a whole new feel for it. It's a chance for an exchange of ideas, and it's important for the faculty to get out and talk to alumni.

Some are here on campus in their own little environment, and they really haven't a good perspective of what alumni are thinking, or what their interests are. This gives them a whole new insight, and sometimes it's a little discomfoting, but it's very important for them to hear some of the concerns that exist.

I also find that the students do a good job of relating to the campers. They get a chance to see the student of today, and it's inspirational; the staff are wonderful people. And the campers see them and realize that they are good kids-- particularly during the sixties and seventies, when there was great concern about the campus--that was probably one of our best

P.R.s for the University. It was the alumni coming up there and meeting the current students saying, "Look, I met some of those kids. They're not bad; they have good ideas. They're not revolutionists."

LaBerge: I'd like to talk about that later on, maybe just with the Alumni Association, about the Free Speech Movement and the different---

Koll: Oh, yes. It was challenging, to say the least.

Finding the Weekly Speakers and Doctors

LaBerge: Well, any faculty there that were particularly notable? Or problems? Like what did you do if you didn't have somebody to speak for a week?

Koll: Well, we always had someone. We had standbys that we could call on a few days notice. We've had the chancellors, we've had Clark Kerr. We've had [Ira] Mike Heyman and Roger Heyns. Most of our chancellors have been up there at one time or another. We've had Nobel Laureates--Wendell Stanley. Of course his daughter married Bob Albo. We've been able to attract, really, a top echelon of faculty. The list is long, and we've used it as a plus for the Alumni Association, because if a faculty member goes to alumni meetings and talks, they get an invitation to the Lair. It's a great invitation; they and their family come up for a free week, and they speak a couple of times, and meet with alumni. It's a very pleasurable experience.

LaBerge: How about finding a doctor? Is that difficult, to find a camp doctor?

Koll: It has been difficult. In early years it was very difficult. The San Francisco Medical Center provided us with a number of them. Bob Palmer was our first doctor. He helped us set up a recruiting program. He would advertise for us and help schedule doctors. And over the years we have recruited a number of new doctors, adding to the list. And every doctor that came, we'd talk to them and they'd suggest additional people. Now they have developed a good list of potential doctors.

But it's always a concern to have one for each week per camp. They're vital to the camp. I can't imagine running a camp without a doctor. Over the years we've had some very concerning experiences where a doctor was vital, virtually to the extent of saving a life. None of us were equipped to handle it. Some

camps have nurses, but I don't feel they're capable of handling that many people with the potential problems that could arise. It's a very reassuring.

Special Interest Weeks

LaBerge: How about the special interest weeks? When did that develop?

Koll: It developed about ten years ago, and primarily it was developed because I wanted to extend the Lair season. When school starts in the fall, the family campers are no longer available, because the kids go back to school. The kids can't come so the parents can't come. So we had two ideas. First, I started the singles' week. It was for people who didn't have children obligations and could come up. It was a great chance to give single people an opportunity to have a vacation in an environment where dating was not the primary focus. They could come up and not have any date requirements and really have a marvelous time enjoying the outdoors. Although I must admit, there have been one or two marriages coming out of every session. But that was not the original intent.

We wanted to add a second week. We considered what types of interest would be appealing to single people and adult couples. So we started the special interest. Of course tennis was an automatic favorite. We had a manager by the name of Ray Thornton, who was a tennis coach, and he also served as an advisor to a number of professional tennis players. He was a natural to take over the leadership of the tennis program. Golf was another activity, to have someone up to teach golf, and people could play at a local course. Hiking, photography, nature were included. Later we added computers, and we made them available; it was for adults. We had great instructors in each of the categories. People would sign up for a specific activity and be there for the week.

Secondly, we upgraded our menus and activities, and relaxed a little bit our alcohol rules. They could bring beer or wine into the dining hall for dinner. It was strictly for adults. And partywise we did bring back more dances, and evening activities which would be of general interest to adult groups. They've been very successful.

Tennis continues to be a sellout every year. Not only our own six courts, but I made provisions for three courts up the road, we rented them. We rented the two courts at Pinecrest, and

two at Miwok. We had ten to fourteen people on each court, and we had 150 participants in the tennis program alone. When Ray had it, he used to bring in some of the college student tennis players from the Irvine campus, and also some of the tennis players from that area. Recently, a very fine addition, the tennis coaches--both men and women--from Cal here are taking on the tennis program and bringing in Cal players. They've been excellent, absolutely marvelous both in teaching and in the P.R. It's been a great addition.

We always scout around for a golfer. We have a photographer who keeps coming back year after year, a professional photographer. The nature hikes have been up and down in popularity. Computers have finally petered out. It was very popular at first because so many people in our age bracket were not familiar with computers, and wanted an elementary course in them. Today it seems that most of the people have some understanding about computers, and the course is not that interesting to them. I think they're looking for other activities to add. But it's been very successful. The rates are a little higher than the ordinary week. It's a money-maker; it's been a good way to extend the season.

LaBerge: And what do you do for regular staff? Or don't you need students?

Koll: Good point. The regular staff is not available, so we go to former Lair staffers. They come back and staff those weeks. It's interesting that they are willing to use it as their vacation. They get nominal salary, but it's nothing especially attractive, just covers their expenses. But we have a number of people who come back year after year and many others who want to come, to participate in the week. It's a chance for them to come back to the Lair like a reunion. They work hard; they do a good job. But they also have a lot of fun doing it.

LaBerge: I bet they do.

Staff Reunions

Koll: Something we've done, I mentioned there's a staff reunion every five years? We started them a while back, and it's been very successful. The last time, we had around 500 former staffers who came back, and they just have a marvelous time. And the one thing--it is run by volunteers, former staffers who plan the programming. The great thing they do is to try and group the

staff. Some would serve the food; others help in the kitchen; others do the maintenance work. They would reunite some of the old crews. If they had a class, the maintenance crew of '65, they would have the maintenance for one week, and the whole group would be together. And so it was a double reunion, not only on the social, but also in the work relationship. And the last time, four of the five original dining hall girls were there and did the serving.

LaBerge: Was one of them your wife?

Koll: Yes. One of them was Jane.

LaBerge: So when is this held? In the spring?

Koll: No, it's after camp closes. It's the week after. They also put on shows. During that particular week they use the best hits from the previous years. There are always get-together parties. It's just a marvelous experience, and pictures are taken.

Order of the Lair Working Bear and Preparing Camp for Opening Day

Koll: One activity that I thought was a lot of fun, twelve years ago I was talking to a group about opening camp, and the problems. Sometimes the staff couldn't get up there early because classes were in progress. And they said, "Why don't you have volunteers come in?" And I said, "Good idea. I'll start a volunteer group where you can come only by invitation," with special requirements. I didn't give much thought to it, and later on, I started getting some calls, "Well aren't we on the invitation list?" And I suddenly thought, "It's a winner!"

So I started the Order of the Lair Working Bear. It was a volunteer group that came up for a long weekend, before camp opens. They came only by invitation, and it was limited to fifty people. We had a society, and I must confess I was the warden, and had a couple of assistants. We had initiation rites for it. If you worked hard and were accepted by this unknown crew of managers, three of us, you were initiated into the Order of the Working Bear. You got a medallion and you had to go through the initiation. You knelt before the warden, and he tapped you on the head with a plumber's aid, and admitted you into the society. Mark Ornellas, a former staffer, did the script for it, and he was just outstandingly clever. It is really a fun event.

We brought in the top people and we always included the president of the Alumni Association and some of the top political powers within the association. They worked, and they had to work hard. It was really a fun program; we ate well, we played hard and worked hard. After I left, the interest dwindled and they no longer have it. But I thought it served a very important purpose.

LaBerge: So you actually got the camp in order to open, too, that weekend. By painting--.

Koll: Everything. Cleaning up, painting, all kinds of things. They would scrub the toilets and the showers, and the dishes were brought out, the dining hall cleaned, and the Kub Korral was set up, the whole thing. We had work crews; we divided the volunteers into special crews. There were carpenters in the group who did some of the needed carpentry work. It was really a hard-working group.

LaBerge: So how do they open up camp today? Or how did you do it before this?

Koll: Well, before we used to try and find some young people who would be available in the area, or former staffers. They're doing that today.

LaBerge: So how long does that usually take?

Koll: Well, you can spend almost as much time as the weather will permit. There were years where we had to snowplow in May to get in. The last several years there has been no problem; they've been able to start in April. There's always so much to do that you never run out of work. They save some of it now for the students who get out of classes in the middle of May. Since the school term has gone back to the semester the staff are available at an earlier date than when we had the quarter system. A number of the staff members are employed to help open.

The Burger Shack and Menu Plan

LaBerge: How about the camp store and the burger shack. Has that always been in existence?

Koll: The camp store has always been in existence, we had it from day one. The number of T-shirts that we have and the variety of items has substantially increased over the years. T-shirts now

are a very big item; of course, they are an item wherever you go. We have a number of people, some of our former staffers, who make them. We also prepare designs and give them to commercial vendors who prepare them for us.

LaBerge: So you must start that in the middle of the year?

Koll: Yes. You start at the first of the year to put together your designs and place orders for the equipment. The burger shack is something that I must admit is a success, contrary to my original idea. When it was first suggested, I thought it was totally out of line, that there was plenty of food and there was no need to run a burger shack. Some of the campers prevailed upon me to try it and it was a great success, and it's been a success ever since. We now have to hire a couple people just to run the burger shack, and certainly it's an important activity for a number of hungry campers at night. And it makes money for the camp.

LaBerge: I can see why you would originally not want it. I've always from the beginning told my kids, "There's food to eat. If you're hungry at night because you didn't eat dinner, use your own money, sorry." [laughter]

Koll: Yes, I know. That's why at night, after the meal, take an apple with you, or something. You'd like to help, but that's not the way it goes. I must say, the interest--it used to be ice cream and candy-oriented, more popular than they are today. I think health drinks and health foods certainly play an important role now in the sales. People are much more health conscious. And the menus at the--.

LaBerge: I was wondering if the menus had changed.

Koll: Substantially. At first they were, you know, heavy lunches, starches, fats, and that sort of thing. The salads were at a minimum. A meat-and-potato menu for a number of years. I must say I give credit to my daughter, who probably had the greatest impact on changing the menu. Unexpectedly, she was made head cook; she was going to work in the kitchen.

LaBerge: Which daughter is this?

Koll: Loretta. And she is a great believer in health foods, and she installed a whole new menu for Camp Gold, based primarily on health foods. In the morning she had juices out, and muffins, and of course the granola and all that, and lightened up the lunches and the dinners with a lot more vegetables.

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LaBerge: So she was head cook about five years ago.

Koll: Yea. There had been gradual changes up to that point, as you would imagine, but nothing nearly as dramatic. It was such a hit with the campers--in fact, they still talk about it--that it has had a continuing impact. And of course it parallels the interest we have today in our eating habits, and a great interest in fresh fruits and vegetables. We have many more vegetarians. Years ago you didn't hear the word "vegetarian." And now it is popular with many people; special diets and interests are available to them.

LaBerge: How have you taken care of special dietary needs?

Koll: If someone has a special need, they must let us know in advance. And if it's some very special item, then they should provide it and put it in the refrigerator. We try and cater to the need. As far as seasoning, we've cut back very substantially on the amount of salt that we use in our foods. It's available, but you add it; the food comes out with very little salt. We try and cater to them, the same way now with the handicapped. We've made access to the dining rooms and the restrooms for handicapped people. It's very important to make camp accessible. We have a few that come up every year. Not large numbers, but a few, and they really enjoy it. There's a very concerted effort by the staff to make sure that they have all the accommodations that they need, and to help them in every way possible.

Staff Training

LaBerge: Well, on that note, is there some special training for staff in personal relations or in just being available to campers? Because they seem to be, and I didn't know if someone told them or it's natural?

Koll: No, they're told. Before you go up to camp you have a staff meeting with all members. It's compulsory attendance, and it concludes with a barbecue. It serves several purposes. Number one, to bring the staff together and let them get acquainted before they arrive at camp. We outline some of the rules. We always try to impress them with the importance of their role; they represent the Alumni Association, and it's important to us that they do a good job and reflect a good image. They're role

models for all the children, and they have a responsibility to the campers.

I'll stress something that I stressed before, that vacation is something very precious to an individual family. And it's in your hands, and it's important that you respond to it, and make it a special occasion for the families. Now obviously some do a better job than others, but it's stressed over and over again--their role to the campers, their service role. There's no special training other than just verbalize it at general meetings.

LaBerge: And again, you said there's a staff meeting every Friday night.

Koll: Every Friday. You go over the week and discuss if there's been a particularly good response to it, or if not.

LaBerge: Since you brought up your daughter, Loretta, let's talk about your family and the Lair.

Koll: Let Jane. You'll have to ask Jane [about] the role of the family in the Lair.¹ She should talk about the daughters and herself. I think it would be interesting to get her perspective on it.

Camp Managers

LaBerge: Okay. How about some other people? You mentioned Bob Albo. How about June and Art Gallon.

Koll: Art and June Gallon were the first managers at Camp Blue. Art had been at Cal as an assistant athletic director, and then was at Santa Barbara as their basketball coach. And I had known him and hired him to be the first manager at Blue. He did a superb job, absolutely superb job. Got us started. He was a good, hardline manager, but he had a good feel for the campers. His wife, June, was a wonderful runningmate. They met all the people when they came in, they made a special effort to get to know their names and to meet with them out on the courts and out on the campgrounds. They launched Camp Blue in a very fine manner.

I have the list of all the managers. Somehow it would probably be good if we could just list them, the people who managed--. I'll single out Noel Helmbrecht. Noel had the

¹See Jane Koll's interview at p. 241 and Lynne and Loretta's joint interview at p. 212.

distinction of being the manager longer than anyone else. He was the manager for ten years at Camp Gold. He and his family practically grew up--well, the kids grew up--at the Lair. He added a lot to it; he had a great feel for the Lair. Both of his sons worked on the staff. He had a very fine camper relationship. Although he has not been manager for several years, he still continues to go up there and help set up camp. Right now he's on the board of directors of the Alumni Association, which is a big plus for the Lair. But I certainly want to recognize the great job that he did. Other people made substantial contributions, and certainly they should be noted in the Lair history.

When I became executive director [of the Alumni Association] and was not going to be able to spend as much time at the Lair as I had previously, I had to find someone to take over as director of the Lair. I hired Ray Bosch, whom I first had contact with in 1960 when I hired him as a student from the Santa Barbara campus to be on the Lair staff. He was a basketball player. Art Gallon and he were closely associated. He did a fine job as a staff member. He actually managed the Stanford camp for a couple years. When I was to leave, I contacted Ray and hired him to be the director of the Lair, a position he's currently serving. That was in 1984. I must add that this past year under his leadership the Lair had one of the best years, actually, the best financially ever experienced at the Lair.

LaBerge: How hard is it to find managers, and how do you go about it?

Koll: Very difficult to find managers. It's one of the hardest jobs because it must be someone who is available during the summer months, has another job the rest of the year, and yet it's a very demanding job. Far more than most realize. You have about 350 people and you're responsible for them the whole week. You have the physical plant, where many things happen: pipes break, electrical systems go out, you have mechanical problems--you have to respond to all of them. Safety is always a big concern. And you have the potential of people getting sick. There are just many, many things.

You have the personal problems, and a lot of people come to the Lair with their own personal problems, and they are reflected in many ways and you have to respond to them. You have staff living closely together, and there are going to be little problems that arise among the staff members, among the campers. You have to respond to all those different concerns.

And it's a twenty-four hour a day job. If something happens in the middle of the night, you're on call. You're on call all

the time. So you have to be able to handle it and keep your own perspective. It is very demanding. You search, and one of the best sources we have has been teachers or coaches, who have nine months' employment in the schools, and are available during the summer. Salarywise we can't compete with some of the other jobs that might be available to them, but it is a great opportunity, particularly if there is a family, to come up for the summer and enjoy the camp. If they are people-oriented, they can have a wonderful time and make some great friendships.

LaBerge: So you want to mention a list of people? Or we can just xerox that and add it. We can make that an appendix to the whole volume.

Koll: Why don't we make this an appendix? Put an Appendix¹ of the Managers who have served at Camp Blue and Camp Gold. I think it should be added.

LaBerge: Is there something else you want to mention?

Role of Special Families

Koll: There are several families who played a very important role, particularly in the early stages of the Lair. The Bob Tuck family, I can't say enough nice things about them. They are a family with eight children and came to the Lair. They contributed so much in the spirit and bringing the camp together and actually contributing a number of things, including a heater and a filter for the Gold pool. When we started the new camp at Blue, they were the first family to go to Camp Blue and make certain that they established the Lair spirit. They have continued to be supportive.

The other family, of course, is the Bud Blue family. They followed that same type of a pattern. They were so dedicated to the camp and the success of it. They made great personal contributions, including the stage for Camp Blue.

The Adrian Krage family was another one. Incidentally, the families have formed great friendships; before coming to the Lair they did not know one another, but ever since, they've been great friends. That's happened over and over again throughout the years, Lair campers form a friendship that's really far more

¹See Appendix.

lasting and, I'd say cherished than any other friendship that they make. Kids have come together and become great friends. They have parties; they have pre-Lair parties and post-Lair parties, and all kinds of activities that bring them together, built around their association at the Lair.

LaBerge: Did Adrian Kragen ever give one of the faculty lectures?

Koll: Yes, he's been a faculty lecturer. His two children worked on the Lair staff.

Helping Other Universities Establish Family Camps

LaBerge: How did you help the University of Michigan and the other universities to set up their camps?

Koll: Well, we were the first Alumni Association to establish a family camp. At a number of national conferences I was asked to give a report on it. A number of universities became interested. The first was BYU [Brigham Young University]; they asked me if I would come and spend a week with them as a consultant. I did, and I helped lay out both their physical plant and their program activities. But obviously, in their case, it was built around their religion more strongly than at our camp. It got off to a good start, and the University of Michigan--

LaBerge: Before you go into that, where is BYU's camp?

Koll: At Provo. Just outside of Provo [Utah]. The University of Michigan was interested in starting a camp, so again, they asked me to come back and spend some time with them. It was interesting because they had a botanical camp, where a number of the botany students spent the summer working. They thought they might convert it. They asked me to come and inspect the site and then make a presentation to their board. I did, and I thought the camp could be changed and adapted to a family environment.

But actually some of the staff at the alumni association were not that excited about it, but when I presented it to their board, they thought it was a good idea. They asked me to stay on a couple more days and present it to their national board. And as a result, they went ahead, and started a camp. It's a very successful camp.

Stanford had also heard a lot about our camp. They wanted me to present an outline to their board of directors of what we

were doing, and how they might get camp started. I did, and they again accepted it, and I helped them organize their programs and their facilities.

LaBerge: Is this the one at Fallen Leaf?

Koll: Fallen Leaf. In fact, their first manager was Mike White, who had been a former staffer at our Lair, and later became the football coach at Cal.

UCLA was always going to have a camp, and I prepared probably four or five different proposals for them, of everything from staffing down to programming. They'd have a change in executive directors and drop it. But finally, a few years ago, they started their own camp at Lake Arrowhead. They went all out. They built condominiums, and it's more of a conference center than it is a summer camp. But it's been quite successful.

Then there was a different version at Santa Barbara. In fact, Ray Bosch helped get it started. It's an on-campus camping program. They live in dorms, they're on the campus, and the program activities are geared around the beach and tennis activities. It's a little different, but people like it. It's more refined, obviously, than the Lair. But the children we find, they don't like it as well. They like to be out in the dust and throw rocks in the creek, and all the other things that go with it.

Indiana also has a family camp, and I worked with them quite a bit. I didn't actually go on the site and lay it out, but I met with their leaders on a number of occasions and presented them with our facts and figures and our staff resumes and anything else that would be helpful to them. Almost all these camps are much more, as I mentioned, developed. Their facilities are more refined than our tent cabins. Their programs, many of them are more closely related to the university. They actually teach courses and have more faculty participation. In their cases it seems to work fairly well, but I could not see it as an activity for the Lair.

In fact, at the Lair one year I tried an idea along those lines. We arranged to have a couple faculty members at camp and people could sign up for the courses during the week. They could get some credit if they wished, or they could take it for non-credit. We sent out the announcement. We got four responses from all of our people. I suddenly realized, they were coming for a vacation, not for an educational experience. They didn't want to devote that much time to it, so we dropped the idea.

- LaBerge: Maybe that's what happened with the computers, too. After the initial interest it seemed too much like work.
- Koll: Yes. Too much work, and too many people have become acquainted with computers. They have computers at home; their kids have computers. In the offices where they were working, computers are present. They had access to computers that years ago did not exist.
- LaBerge: And so these different universities found you or knew you through national alumni associations?
- Koll: Yes. I've gone to CASE, that's the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. It's a national organization of alumni directors. From the presentations I made, they heard about it. It was a success story, and so it got a lot of attention. Everybody kept saying, "Well, why can't we do it?" Most of them did not realize the amount of effort and planning that must go into a successful camping program. Many of them thought you just put up the facilities, stand back, and the alumni come from all directions to attend and it's a success. Unaware of the program planning needed, the internal economics--many of them did not come out as financially successful as they expected. They did not put the time and energy into buying and watching expenses and promoting. It's a big business, and anybody who doesn't appreciate it is going to be in for a horrible surprise.
- LaBerge: Should we end there?
- Koll: Fine, that's good, great.

The Natural Environment

[Interview 5: January 23, 1992]###

- LaBerge: Okay, we're going to try to finish up talking about the Lair today, and one of the aspects of the program I'd like to hear more about is the nature program. I assume you started with that the first year.
- Koll: Yes.
- LaBerge: Did you hire a nature director?
- Koll: The first year or two we didn't, but very soon afterwards we did; it obviously was going to be a very important part of our

programming. We hired an individual, and in fact, the first outstanding naturalist we had was Alan West, who majored in forestry and has a doctorate in forestry. Today he is back in Washington, D.C., one of the top leaders in the U.S. Forestry Department.

We had another director, by the name of Dick Jones, who is now a botany professor at the University of Colorado. They perhaps did the most toward launching our program. Certainly I very much endorsed their idea of a very extensive nature program. One of the great things the Lair had to offer is--particularly to young people--a chance to become acquainted with nature and its pleasures. And through their introduction at the Lair, their eyes were opened, and they became excited about it. At first we used to have a museum that was quite elaborate. We had live specimens in it as well as botany exhibits.

LaBerge: Live specimens like--?

Koll: Chipmunks, and we had snakes, and we had frogs and all sorts of specimens. Eventually people objected to it, and were concerned about putting wildlife into captivity, so we gave it up. But we still have botanical exhibits. One of the programs we used to have for the young kids: they would ask them to bring in specimens from the forest, and they would be identified by the naturalist. At the campfire on Friday night, the one who had brought in the most and the most exciting would be given an award. We've discontinued it when one of the young people brought in a snake, and unfortunately, when it was checked, it could rattle. [laughter] It was a very small rattlesnake; no one was hurt, but it did put a damper on some of the encouragement about going out and bringing in unusual specimens.

They also used to take trips and they would identify the trees. In fact for a number of years all of the trees around camp were labeled. So one might take a nature walk on their own. But an important part was also looking at the footprints along the stream. Deer and raccoons and many other animals would leave prints; and we'd teach the young people to identify the different footprints, and give them an appreciation of the wildlife that actually lived in the area. On rare occasions, we found a bear track. It didn't help the people who weren't feeling confident about the security of the environment. I think it is a very important part of the program.

Another activity that we added was astronomy. It was interesting that one of our early staff members, Hiram Spinrod, was very much involved in astronomy. Later he came to the University and got his degree and is one of the outstanding

professors at the University in astronomy. He has made some very exciting discoveries on his own. It's a great place to study astronomy because the air is so clear. On a clear night--the camp purchased a telescope--and you can go out on the baseball field and point it at the stars and see some enchanting sights. That was done at least once a week.

We had one camp manager, Bob Mason, who was also a naturalist, and he brought a hawk into camp. He had it trained and used to release it, let it fly and it would come back. It got a lot of attention. A fawn was brought into camp. Apparently its mother had been killed on the road. I took it, and it was not feeling very well--it was sick--so I took it down to our camp doctor. He worked with it and it recovered, and we had it in camp. In the morning I would go and feed it with a bottle. It would follow me all over camp, and obviously it was a great favorite with the children. We used to turn it loose, and it would romp around in the meadow. The children would come, and a lot of pictures were taken.

Finally, I would say the nature program is very, very important to the camp. It continues to attract a large number of campers of all ages, and I think it's a marvelous opportunity for us to enrich the lives of the people who come. It's certainly been a very important part of my life, and I like to see others enjoy it as well.

Hikes

LaBerge: Well, did you start with the hikes the first year?

Koll: Yes. The hikes started early. They have been expanded. They used to be a half-a-day hike around the lake, and we expanded it to full-day hikes, and now of course we hike all over the area. And they're a very important program event. Many people look forward to it each year.

LaBerge: That's one of my favorite things.

Koll: It's my wife's, Jane's, favorite, too. She likes to go on the hikes.

LaBerge: When you hire somebody to be nature director, do they have to have certain qualifications? Or do they come out early and learn?

- Koll: Yes. Well, there are two ways. Number one, of course, is that they're in the field, maybe a forestry major, maybe a zoology major, botany major, someone who has a real interest and some basic skills or knowledge of the area. And secondly, staff members who may not be a naturalist, but enjoy it, become involved with the program, and start as an apprentice, and then work their way up to being a director the following year.
- LaBerge: Do you want to mention some of the hikes, besides around the lake, that are favorites?
- Koll: Well, Cleo's Bath is one that starts at the lake, and it's a must-see. It's a half-a-day hike, and you hike around the lake and climb partway up the mountain: it's a beautiful spot. And they have gone to Burst Rock and to Powell Lake, that's a full-day hike. Iceberg meadows is another full-day hike. Another fine trip we have early in the year, is up Sonora Pass, when there is still a lot of snow. During the early weeks people go up and the kids bring garbage covers and slide down the hill and have a great day playing in the snow. The last several years there hasn't been enough snow to accommodate the trip. They have traveled over to the Mono [Lake] side on some of the more ambitious hikes. Levit Peak and the Dardanelles are interesting areas. All very scenic and very rugged.
- LaBerge: I think another great thing about it is that the kids get a chance to do that, too. A lot of kids I know wouldn't do it with their parents. But with the naturalist or with their director, they'll take a hike to Cleo's.
- Koll: Yes. I think that's important they do. The teens have a particular hike. Not only do they enjoy the hike, but the social opportunities that go with it.
- LaBerge: It's a great way to be introduced to it.
- Koll: Actually I would like to see the program expanded. It's such a wonderful way to introduce nature and an understanding of what goes on in the environment. There's so much concern about the environment. I think it's important to get an appreciation of the positive things and some of the concerns that we should have. And there's a stream going through camp, so we're concerned about keeping it pure and avoiding possible contamination.

Ecological Awareness

LaBerge: You know, another thing I've been impressed with--and I assume it started early on--was the recycling and the ecological awareness.

Koll: It's interesting. It's happened in the last ten years, but it's grown in leaps and bounds. And the staff are extremely dedicated to it.

LaBerge: They really are.

Koll: In fact, to the point that anyone throwing something away in the garbage is usually censured. It's brought to their attention. Each week they take a load down to a recycling center, with all the cans and recyclable material. It's very encouraging to see young people have a strong interest and dedication to the recycling process. I think some of us who are older perhaps are not as aware as we should be. I'm very impressed with their dedication to it.

LaBerge: And it makes a big impression on the children, to see that staff do that.

Koll: Yes. And also, it helps clean up the camp; cans are picked up and other items, too. [laughter] On every Saturday morning it's "Sweep the Forest," as it's called. The young people come to the store and are given a big paper bag, and they go out and pick up all kinds of debris, little pieces of paper, whatever it may be. Years ago it used to be cigarette butts, and fortunately, that is not needed today. But there are cans, bottles, and paper. Everything is picked up and the camp is cleaned for the following week. They are rewarded with candies or special items at the store when they bring in their bag. It's a good way to get it accomplished. Also, it's an important lesson for the younger people, about keeping the forest clean and picking things up.

LaBerge: It gives them a sense of responsibility about the camp, too.

Koll: That's right, yes.

LaBerge: Any other experiences with hikes, nature program anecdotes like the rattlesnake?

Getting Lost

Koll: Okay. One time we had in camp an elderly gentleman who had a history of not being totally responsible about his whereabouts. There was a hike going out to one of the lakes, Blue Lake. His daughter went along to make certain that he did not wander off. They were at the lake having lunch, and suddenly she looked up and he was missing. She started to look and alerted the director, and they both looked. They thought that perhaps he had started back and would be back at the road with the cars. When they came back there was no evidence of him. So immediately they rushed back to camp, and that evening in camp we organized a search party and went to look for him. We did not find him.

We called in the Tuolumne County Search Unit the next day, and we had helicopters and a group of professionals join us. We searched the area and were unable to find him. Then we also organized a massive hunt for the area. We had about seventy-five people spread out across the mountain. We were not able to pick up any evidence of his whereabouts. It went on and on. He was never found.

But later, the following year, a hunter found some of his remains in a very deep canyon--a knapsack and bones that were identified. Apparently he had headed back on the trail to the main highway. And the only thing we could figure is that he started towards car lights on the main highway, thinking he could take a shortcut; there were deep canyons. And he fell into one of the canyons.

LaBerge: That's one of the reasons why I appreciate going on the organized hikes, because a lot of those, I wouldn't want to go on by myself, even if there is a well-marked trail and--.

Koll: It's so easy to get lost. We had one other lost camper. On one of my fishing trips, I took a man by the name of Derlack along with me. We rode in and we all went fishing. When I came back to the horses, one of the campers who came back early said, "Derlack wanted to hike, so he was going to hike back to camp." It's a long way, and I was quite concerned. But it was too late then to do anything, so we started out. I kept looking at the trail and I could pick up his footprints. He was on the trail, and I was more confident. Finally we got to the stable at about dusk, and I expected to see him there. He was not there. The packer said, no, that he had not come in.

We sent the people to camp, and Reno Sardella, who ran the stables, and I got on horses and went back, looking along on the

trail. We couldn't find anything, so early the next morning we started out again. We picked up his trail quite a ways back because he had an unusual print on his shoes; we could follow it. It came almost to the corral and then it veered off and went back into the canyons. We couldn't understand it. We spent the whole day tracking him back and forth and were not able to find him. So the next morning I arranged a search party. We had the sheriff's posse and a whole group of people with dogs to search the area. We had a signal so that if he was found, they would fire a couple shots, and by about ten o'clock a couple shots were fired. They found him; he was hiding from us. And he had circled us the whole time; every time we got close to him he would hide.

LaBerge: You are kidding!

Koll: And I talked to his wife the night before, and she said, "The old fool has done it again." And I said, "What do you mean?" because I was just panicked to tell her that we'd lost her husband. She said, "He wanders off sometimes and you can't trust him." He was having a great time, hiding from us.

LaBerge: Playing hide and seek.

Koll: Playing hide and go seek, yes. He would double back and watch the group go by and then he'd come back out. And when he came into camp I could have killed him. Because I hadn't slept for two nights, the whole camp had been disrupted, everybody--. And he thought it was a big joke. So we sent him down the hill in a hurry, without ever allowing him to come back to camp.

LaBerge: I bet, yes.

Koll: It was really an unpleasant experience.

Early, when we first opened the camp, before Camp Blue, we had several occasions where children wandered off. Campers would check in on Saturday and they weren't fully oriented as to where their tent was located. And suddenly you'd have a parent come up in a panic state and say their child was missing. On three different occasions we organized parties and then would sweep down the forest, toward Camp Blue. We found them all within a few hours, but I think the rather surprising fact was the distance they could travel. We'd find them a mile or so from camp, in say, less than an hour. They would get started, they would take off and just wander off and keep going. We always found them, but it always concerned us. So now we have a great orientation program to tell parents to be sure and teach their children their tent location and the paths and the directions,

and not allow them to wander off, particularly the first day or two in camp. There are no developments for miles. We always have the fear of their falling into the stream.

Bears

LaBerge: Well, did you ever have an instance of a bear in camp? Or just tracks that you saw?

Koll: Oh, yes. Oh, a number of them. Over the years--in fact I must say that the first year, we had a bear that came right into the kitchen at Camp Gold, breaking into the kitchen and causing great problems. It would come around and scare people. That was before the great concern about the wildlife, so I brought up my .22 rifle. The bear came back one Sunday, and I had permission from the Fish and Game, so I shot it. Jane went over and reported it to the Forest Service, and they came rushing over with a rifle, a big deer rifle and said, "You can't kill a bear with a .22." Well, I had. [laughter] But anyhow, we skinned it and we had a barbecue.

But over the years we've had bears in camp frequently. I've chased them out, I've hit them with tennis balls, I've thrown tennis rackets at them and rocks. People are quite frightened by them, but actually the bear is much more concerned about the people and more frightened by the people than anything else. Well, one good bear story, and it's a true one.

One night our swimming instructor, Bill Ososki, came into the kitchen at Blue to have a late snack, and when he walked in, there was a bear in the middle of the kitchen. And he froze in panic. There was a table near by, and he grabbed the table and put it up against the door and rushed out. And the next morning he came back and he couldn't lift the end of the table. Yet the night before, he'd been able to pick it up and put it in place. Obviously the adrenalin had played a very important role in it.

We've had raccoons that have come into tents, and of course, chipmunks are a favorite. People who leave food in their tents are just inviting some of the wildlife to come in and enjoy it.

LaBerge: Well, do you have any other nature anecdotes?

Koll: Not in nature.

Maintenance Year-round

LaBerge: The one other thing I wanted to ask about was the kind of maintenance you have to do throughout the year for the Lair, and repair. What that entails.

Koll: The maintenance to some extent depends on the type of winter that you have. Some years we've had a number of trees go down. Some of them go through tent cabins, and obviously that's a major replacement job. Other times we've had roofs that, because of the heavy snows, have been damaged and had to replace them. But you always have a general maintenance problem because the wood frames of the tent cabins are exposed to winter weathering, rain and snow, and there's an aging process that takes place. You go through and check all the tent cabins and replace the boards that have been weakened, and the steps leading up and then the railings. That's a major program.

LaBerge: Well, I guess so, because how many tent cabins are in each camp?

Koll: You have around ninety in each camp, about ninety tent cabins. They vary in size. There are 10'x 10' and 12'x 14' and 14'x 16'. The different sizes are used in accommodating different family sizes. But they have to be checked every year, and that includes the staff area and all roofs. Over the years we'd had a number of problems with our dining hall roofs, and just recently they've put on a metal covering, which has been very effective. It sheds snows. Years in the past, I've gone there and had crews come in, where we had to use chain saws, as we had over seven feet of snow on some of the roofs. Obviously the weight is just tremendous. We had to use the chainsaw to cut it off in blocks and slide it off the roofs. But those were years when we had much heavier snow than we've had recently.

All the buildings need paint. It is another big job. We try and keep them well painted. The paint takes a beating because of weather, the permanent buildings as well as the tent cabins. Canvas is another item that we have to check every fall, all the tent cabins. The canvas is taken down and stored, as well as the beds and the mattresses. And at that time you take an inventory and try to determine items that should be replaced.

LaBerge: Where do you store them?

Koll: We store them in several places. The dining halls are used for all the mattresses. We stand them on end and on top of the tables. And the metal beds are stored either in the lodges or in the toilet and shower buildings. All the athletic equipment must

be taken in. Basically, the camp is stripped of everything except the frames.

LaBerge: And you take the inventory in the fall. So then you do your ordering during the winter?

Koll: Yes, in the winter, so we can have them in the spring. Again, in the spring you have the big job of setting up camp. We use different crews, sometimes we hire locally. We used to have the Cal coaches who would come up and use it as an outing over Memorial [Day] weekend. One year as a setup crew, we had Bill Walsh, John Robinson, Dick Vermeil, and Mike White all were up there setting up camp. They had some of their assistants with them. They used to do a very good job the first day, but at night they would go out, and the next day they were not nearly as effective. [laughter] But it was a fun experience. Since then we've used a number of different former staff groups.

LaBerge: How about the plumbing?

Koll: Well, we have a plumber that's been with us for a long time, and he knows the system. He checks it each spring. Throughout the year there always are plumbing problems, lines that start to leak, plugged-up sewage lines, different things that must be cared for.

LaBerge: Who thought up the names for the bathrooms?

Koll: Bear Men and Bear Women?

LaBerge: Right.

Koll: It started the first year. And I don't know, just some of the staff people. And the Kub Korral started, with the "K"'s on it. The K's are taken off Koll, K-o-l-l. That's how the "K" came in.

LaBerge: Oh, I wondered. Isn't that great!

Koll: And they used to call the dining hall girls "Koll's Kuties," the first year.

LaBerge: With a "K"?

Koll: Oh, yes. [laughter] And the store was then a log cabin store, and it was "Koll's Kave."

LaBerge: Oh, that's great. I've never heard that before.

Koll: It started the very first year up there. I think Marty Cullom was responsible for a lot of it.

Camp Committee

LaBerge: Okay, why don't we go on now to the Camp Council, who it is and what its function is.

Koll: Yes. Well, the California Alumni Association is managed and directed by a board of directors. They used to be called council, now they are called Alumni Directors. It's a separate corporation from the University, so they're totally self-governed. The camp committee is one of the committees, the standing committee of the Alumni Council. The council has a number of appointed committees. Basically a committee for every major activity. There's a scholarship committee, there's a club committee, there's a legislative relations committee, and of course the camp committee.

They're generally members of the Alumni Council, and they're appointed for a one-year term. Although, on occasion we've had ad hoc members who were campers and had been associated with the camp program a long time, or former staffers who have something special to offer to the committee. Too often the members of the committee are not that familiar with the Lair operation and its philosophy. It's important to have people there who have several years of experience.

The committee functions primarily as a policy-making group. There are a number of areas in which they are involved in setting guidelines for the directors in the operation of the camp. They help develop and prepare long-range development plans for the camping program. Of course, the director always plays a very important role in all this, but the camp is one of their responsibilities. The director will prepare an annual budget. It first goes to the camp committee, and they review it and they endorse it. Any of their decisions are merely recommendations to the council; the final approval always rests with the council.

LaBerge: With the Alumni Council.

Koll: Yes, the Alumni Council. They also approve the rate structures for the camps. They'll make recommendations in regards to the staffing, adding more staff members, or the sources of staff, or the composition of staff. Basically, at the end of each season, their first meeting agenda is a critique of the year, both in

regards to the program, the facilities, and the financial success. Based on the critique, they'll give some thought as to what should be done for next year.

I've mentioned that all their recommendations go to the full council for final approval. Their term is for one year, but they can serve for more than one year, and usually the chairman of the committee is someone who, hopefully, has had some real camp experience, but has also been on the committee at least a year before taking over.

LaBerge: So they're really an advisory board, and the Alumni Council makes the final decisions.

Koll: Final decisions. One thing we've done that I think is quite important, is every other year, we attempt to have the council schedule a meeting at the Lair. And that's before it opens in the spring. It's a chance to acquaint everyone with the Lair program. And the camp committee is responsible for putting on the meeting for the directors, and making it an interesting experience for all the members.

LaBerge: Could you give an example of one of their recommendations that you would follow through with? Or did you usually suggest things and they would consider it?

Koll: I think primarily we'd come with a number of ideas for them to review.

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Koll: The camp committee. We bring a number of ideas to them. However they have had some very good ideas in regards to programming, because many of them have children and they attend as campers. They have a feeling for the need of additional programming in certain areas or staffing in certain areas that a director may overlook. They have a different insight as well.

Also in regards to the teenage drinking problem that has developed over the years, they had some good insights on how to handle it. Some of them had teenagers who were going through the experience. They were very valuable; I think it's very important, because it takes some of the load off the director's shoulders. If you have to go to the council for approval for monies and budget, you can do it within the volunteer organization. It's much more effective than having staff asking for it. They're a good sounding board for many of our ideas.

LaBerge: Would they, for instance, read the evaluations at the end of the summer? Or who reads that?

Koll: We'd summarize them and present them to the camp committee. Again, if there were things mentioned repeatedly, at that point we'd make a decision on what should we do to respond to the requests that were made. I think one of the important things that we've always stressed--and it has been sometimes a bit of a problem--to keep them at the policy level and not in the management. So they would not go to a camp manager and give a directive, but it should go back to the director and have him present it. They've been quite good, but at the start of each year I think the director should restate their role.

LaBerge: So they don't have anything to do with hiring.

Koll: No. Although, some have tried. [laughter]

LaBerge: I wondered about that.

Koll: Yes. And unfortunately, it's the worst thing that happens--and it has happened--they have a son or daughter and they want them on the staff. And that's very difficult, and there's pressure exerted. Quite simply, when I was there, I just made the decision that the Lair came first. I would turn some down, and it wasn't always a pleasant circumstance.

The problem is, you're doing an injustice to the young person if you bring them up there and they haven't really earned the right to be on the staff. The rest of the staff very quickly recognizes why they're there, and it's difficult for everyone. In the long run, it's the only thing to do, but it takes a lot of courage. A few occasions where we made an exception, it was a mistake. But it continues, I know in just the last few years there's been pressure placed on the director to hire a council member's or camp committee member's son or daughter.

LaBerge: Well, that's sort of what the world is like, too. I mean, it happens everywhere. But I'm sure it's hard, you know, to take a stand.

Koll: I think I was fortunate in having been there a long time and the Lair had a recognized success. Perhaps I was able to take positions and make decisions that are more difficult today.

Expansion of Staff

LaBerge: Why don't we talk just a little bit more about the staff, then, since we're kind of on that? I know that the staff has expanded.

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And for instance, do you have more staff yearlong? Besides just the staff during the summer? I mean, at first you were the only staff--right?--that was yearlong. And now how many are yearlong?

Koll: Now we have two full-time staff members at the office in addition to the director. They work with reservations, promotion, help with the critiques, and help with the staffing for the following year, arranging interviews and related activities. As far as the camp staff, we started with nineteen the first year, and I think now they have over forty-five at each camp. We started with 125 capacity, and now they have about 350 per camp. The staff has increased obviously, as it should.

There's really no final limit of the number of staffers that you could use, but you have to use economic judgement in deciding. They cost money, and housing and all the other things. You could continue to add different programs each year. But I think at the current time they're doing a pretty good job of covering the major interest areas for campers. And again, you don't want camp to be too regimented. It's good for people to be on their own a little bit, and do some things that may tap their own creativity.

LaBerge: You were talking about doing promotion, and advertising techniques. How much of that do you have to do, and how much of it do you just do?

Koll: When we first started out with the camp, there was a great deal needed. We had a couple of movies made of the Lair program, and I used to take them around to alumni meetings. Anytime we had a club meeting, I would try to be on the program, either with the movie or give a talk, to describe the Lair and what was offered and the opportunities for everyone to participate. In addition, we've always had a brochure prepared, which we send to all Alumni Association members. We try to run stories each year in the California Monthly about the Lair. We've carried ads in the Monthly each year about the Lair program.

In all reality, we probably wouldn't have to do that much advertising because each year the Lair is sold out, but I think it would be a big mistake not to continue to promote. It's very

important that the Lair is filled, because you work on a relatively small margin per camper. I worked very hard to get every tent filled to capacity. If you add one or two more campers per week during the season, you've added about fifteen, twenty thousand dollars to the gross income.

The Lair as a Business

Koll: So it's very important that it's run as a business, because it is a big business. You're grossing well over one million dollars per year, and a number of cost centers--food particularly must be watched carefully. It can make a great deal of difference in the final profit. One thing I had to defend earlier was our policy of giving preference to people who had been there previous years. We used to call them pioneers, but obviously that is discontinued. Anyone who had been there previously was given some preference in assignment. Some people thought we should reverse the order and give the new people the opportunity, because they have been excluded when it was sold out every year. But it's not a good business policy. Satisfied customers are the people you want to come back. You want people to be able to count on coming to the Lair.

As a result, we've had people who have come for twenty, twenty-five years in a row, and that's an ideal business arrangement. We have a group of satisfied customers coming back that you can count on. They help publicize the camp and they help carry on the traditions that have been established. Eventually they accepted that policy, but for a long time it was something to be defended each year to the camp committee and to the council.

LaBerge: I mean, it goes so far as to include that you have preference for your tent, too. Doesn't it? That must be difficult, to work that all out.

Koll: Very much so. It is very difficult. You can put your preference down. It's become more important over the years. When you come back several years, you get accustomed to a certain tent, a certain area. There's great concern if you aren't able to get it. Now it's based on the number of years you've been coming, because in the same week you may have two or three families who want the same tent. You give it to the family that's been coming the longest, and you can justify it on the attendance basis. It may not satisfy everybody, but at least it's a reason for doing it.

It's interesting, the strong feeling that people have about the camps. It's remarkable, there's almost a perfect split between Camp Blue and Camp Gold as far as campers' preference is concerned. You couldn't give a number of campers a free week at the other camp; they wouldn't take it! They're so provincial in their attitudes. There's only one camp for them. And they're positive their camp is much better than the other one. It's a question that I'm asked all the time, "Which camp really is the best?" And I sincerely say, "Well, each has some advantages." I've been at both; I spent about the first twelve years at Gold, and ever since then I've been at Blue. And I like them both.

LaBerge: I'm interested in your talking more about the Lair as a business, because I think a lot of people don't realize that. It's obvious to me from talking to you, that it really is and you had to--I mean, you developed it, and you really have to be a business person to be the manager. It's not sort of this college camp director or whatever. It really is a business.

Koll: A camp manager can run the camp, but a camp director must be planning the business aspect of it very, very carefully, and analyzing the operation. Something that I did during the summer; I had all the bills go over my desk and I would initial them. Because I could tell from past experience, if the meat costs were too high, or if the vegetable costs were escalating or other costs were out of line. It enabled me to keep my finger on it. Because the statements that come out are not very helpful. They're put out monthly by the Alumni House, but you get them a month and a half to two months afterwards. The season's so short that you aren't able to judge the direction you are going in until the final statements are out.

All things must be planned very carefully. The initial budget that you make out for the year must be very thoughtfully prepared. Yes, there's over a million dollars involved, and it's easy to turn a profit into a loss by letting things get out of hand. Between the two kitchens, I've observed that food costs can be ten to fifteen thousand dollars' different. There's no reason for it. We prepare a menu at the first of the year. It's how well do they utilize their supplies and plan the amount that they cook. You plan to have plenty, but not have a big waste. If there are some leftovers, how well do they utilize them? And all through the maintenance areas, how wasteful are they of maintenance products? You have to monitor all those.

We try and buy at the first part of the year our major supplies from big companies. We used to have a very competitive bidding process and we could save fifteen to twenty thousand dollars a year by having competitive bids on our basic food

supplies. They would bring them up in a big truck and trailer for each camp at one time. It was great for the suppliers, and it was a good way for us to save money. We still buy supplies from the local store, but you have to monitor it.

LaBerge: The local store being--?

Koll: In Pinecrest. Last minute supplies. I used to monitor them very closely.

LaBerge: Because that can add up more than--.

Koll: Well, it was used, let's say, a little carelessly at times. We had to limit the number of people who could charge at the store, because people were using it to get things for personal use. When you supplement your initial order, there are wholesale suppliers both in Modesto and in Sonora, and their prices would be 15 to 20 percent higher than what we paid when we got our initial order. It was quite important to figure those orders as closely as possible.

And I found with the meat, it's another big item, it was important to get a bid at the start of the year from a company, so you had an idea what your costs were. And it's important to occasionally have a weight check. It's quite easy for the order to be a few pounds short each week. When you add it up at the end of the year it's a substantial amount. So all those things are important in regards to the total financial picture.

The Lair certainly did not start out as a revenue source for the Association, but it has developed into a very, very substantial income for the Alumni Association.

The monies from the camp go into the general operation fund. The only exception, we have established a couple of special reserves over the years.

When we entered the sewer district, there was a bond to be paid off, a fifteen-year bond. We set up a sewage charge on each reservation, and the money was used to pay off the bond. Also along the way we established what I called a major maintenance fund. It was to replace buildings. We built it up to a couple hundred thousand. It's set up to add about twenty thousand a year. Letting it accumulate for a few years, you have enough money in the account to replace a building or add a new building. Otherwise it would have to come out of the operational funds of the Association, and there's not that amount of surplus available. The other money goes into the general operation of the Association.

LaBerge: Now, how did you know how to do all this? Did you just learn it?

Koll: Well, some of it was learned as I went along from the background and experiences I had from many areas. The management of it, starting from scratch. And I talked to Emery Curtice and Bill Rhodes, and I had a very good friend who was a salesman for a large food supply company. He helped me a great deal, about how to buy supplies. Primarily it was learning as you went along, and once you've had a few years' experience, you know what to look for.

LaBerge: Who was your friend in the food supply?

Koll: Ken Volker. We're still very good friends. He's moved to Washington, but we still correspond. He was very helpful.

LaBerge: For instance, when you were at camp and you had the bills coming in, and you would notice something going up, or that one camp is using more food than the other, how would you handle that?

Koll: I would talk to the manager; I would have a meeting with the manager. I always thought it was very important that I went to the manager and not to the kitchen. I would call him. "We've got a problem here, what do you think?" We might call in the head of the kitchen, and talk to him about it.

"Look. This is happening? Why are these amounts going up? You're ordering quite a bit more for a particular meal than the other camp. Why is that?" We would then adjust and hopefully correct it before it got too far out of line.

LaBerge: What do you do with the leftover food?

Koll: Occasionally, there is some that you can't use. You have a fixed menu. Some of it goes into soups, and some of the meats you can use for lunch meats. You can improvise the lunches. Occasionally you can use some of your leftovers for lunch meals. The breakfast and dinners are firm. In fact we have a menu for all meals, but you can substitute. The evening meals are not subject to substitution. You might add a vegetable for some particular reason, but the main entree is fixed for the year.

The camp has the same weekly menu because there is a new group of campers every week. That's fortunate, because the cooks get an idea of how much they should prepare for each meal. They know exactly, at the start of the week, how many people are going to be in camp. It will fluctuate less than fifteen, twenty people from one week to another.

LaBerge: I suppose, too, it depends on the age group. Do you take that into account when you look at the week? With the cook? Maybe they have twenty kids one week, and the next it's only ten.

Koll: I don't think they're quite that accurate. In programming, yes. Interesting, years ago, the big thing used to be consumption of milk. Teenagers used to have competitions on how much milk they could drink. And they would drink twenty, thirty quarts per table. Now milk is not that popular. We did find that when we started to make more water available, it cut down on the milk consumption and obviously, on the costs. People do prefer water or iced tea.

LaBerge: On that same business aspect, I know the first year we went, it was opened a week earlier than it is now. And only one of the camps was open. That was sort of discontinued. I suppose there were only ninety people there. It didn't prove to be popular.

Koll: You can't afford to run a camp for ninety. It's important to have almost a full camp to make it economically sound.

Another thing you have to recognize is that your cooks are not always that experienced. Most of them now come up through the ranks, and we have some from the culinary schools of junior colleges. They basically do a good job, but they're not that professional in the management of their kitchen. And that's where I think they need help. Cleanliness is always a great concern in the kitchen and in the dishwashing. And over the years we have attempted to improve it. The health department comes up every year and inspects our operation. They make some good suggestions.

We have had over the years some epidemics of flu and diarrhea in camp. First thing everybody suspects is food, food poisoning. We've had a number of health people check it out, both campers and the county officials, and usually we can trace it back by looking at the doctor's records that it was brought in by the children in the Kub Korral. It spreads rapidly in the families and throughout camp.

As for the dishwashing, we've changed our procedures a couple of times, and I think we've reduced the potential of transmitting it through the dishwashing process. The kitchen is inspected to make certain that everything is kept under refrigeration. The cleanliness in the kitchen is extremely important.

Requirements for the Lair Director

LaBerge: Well, just in terms of the business aspect, how important that is, I'm sure that's one of the requirements when you were looking for the director of the Lair, when you were leaving.

Koll: Ray Bosch.

LaBerge: What do you look for? What does that person need to have, as far as abilities and qualities?

Koll: Well someone--. I haven't really thought about it. I just knew the person, and I knew I was going to be working with him. For four years I worked with him and played an active role in the management. I would go over the budget with him before it was presented to the camp committee, and go over the menus with him. I must say, I was working as a close supervisor. He's doing an excellent job now with the financial management, as indicated this past year, when they had the best financial year in the history of the Lair.

But now, if I was on a committee looking for someone, I would want someone who would have a vision as to the Lair's future. It's something that a director must have--a goal--and keep the Lair on track. Your volunteer committees and council members exert a great deal of pressure--as we said earlier--to change the direction, alter it. Some of it may be for the good, but a lot of it would take away from the great program. So you have to have a vision and keep it on track. You want to enhance it, but you don't want to change it dramatically. You still want to keep it a camp.

But you must also have an understanding of its role in regards to the Alumni Association, and that it is an important revenue center. People have wanted to increase the amount of money it produces. My feeling has always been it's important that it provides a good, affordable, interesting vacation for our young alumni. Many of the people who attend are young alumni families. They have limited means. You want them to be able to afford to come. You must keep the rates down.

I'm sure with the backlog you could probably raise the rates quite a bit more and alumni would still fill it. But I think it would be a mistake. It is a great service. There are many benefits that come from the camping program in addition to the economic.

And getting back to the director. The person must be someone who can relate well to people, have a feel for the people, the staffing and the whole program area. Hopefully the person is a bit political in their dealing with the council and the camp committee; it's important.

LaBerge: And would you say that this business sense is--.

Koll: Very good, very good, he must have it.

LaBerge: Would you recommend in the future, for instance the next Lair director, to be an apprentice?

Koll: That would be ideal. That would be absolutely ideal. There's so much more that goes on at the management level in the camp than most people appreciate. It's a very demanding job requiring many different skills, understandings, abilities, and I think someone coming up through the ranks would have a much better appreciation and would have demonstrated their ability. To bring someone in from the outside, I think the program might be in jeopardy. And there's a special Lair way of doing things, a special Lair spirit. I think it contributes a great deal to the overall success.

Lair's Relation to the University

LaBerge: Well, let's talk about the impact and the importance of the Lair in relation to the University, in relation to the Alumni Association.

Koll: Yes. I think many of the campers would say that the Lair is probably the best public relations program the University has. I think actually hundreds of thousands of campers have gone through the camp over the years. And very, very few came away without a favorable impression of the program. And through it, also a very favorable impression of the University and the Alumni Association.

From the University, you have a couple of faculty members in camp each week. And it's a chance for alumni to get to know the current faculty, understand some of the University's problems, goals, and if they have a concern, an opportunity to express it and get an answer. It's also important for them to meet the students. Because they have misconceptions of the attitudes of students, their willingness to work and the quality of them. And here they see them, a select group. They see a great student

staffer, a very impressive student who is putting out a strong effort, working hard, and appreciative of their University experience. It has a very positive impact.

I know that a couple of our Chancellors said they had to go to the Lair because whenever they went out to alumni gatherings, everybody asked them about the Lair. They had to know more about it to be able to respond. It has made a very important contribution to the overall understanding of the University, and provides a chance to communicate, to exchange ideas.

For the Alumni Association, it's been, again, even more important to them. It's without question, in my opinion, the most important activity they carry on. Both for economic and for public relations and all the other spinoff benefits they get from it. I mentioned it's a very important source of revenue. But it's a service that the Alumni Association offers to its membership. It's a great service that we can provide for alumni, and it's had a great impact on the sale of memberships.

LaBerge: Oh, I bet. I didn't even think of that aspect.

Koll: There's a special rate at the Lair if you are an association member, also you get mailings and special privileges. Years ago, when we used to keep track, we'd sell well over a hundred memberships each year. Potential campers would buy them. Or they would continue to pay their annual membership dues as they wanted to be in good standing for the Lair. It's served as an excellent way to recruit leadership for the Alumni Association, also for the Foundation and the University. Campers who keep coming up several years in a row can be recognized as potential leaders. In my Alumni Association work with clubs I would utilize those contacts and bring them into the leadership roles in the Association.

And another great thing for the Alumni Association is the staff. You have about eighty young people, students up there, who after a summer are very familiar with the Alumni Association and its programming, and you're building leadership for the future. A number of people on the Alumni board of directors are former Lair staffers. People who head up the club programs or the scholarship programs, and other activities of the association, many of those people are former Lair staffers who have been trained about the programming of the association, and are very loyal to the association and are very willing to serve.

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LaBerge: Okay, we were talking about the loyalty of the staff.

Koll: I mentioned it was a way of bringing young people back into the University fold. When the students graduate from the University, for the next several years they're busy with their jobs, getting married, and having families. They drift away from the University, it's not one of their top priorities.

They come to the Lair. They come for a vacation not primarily because it's University-oriented. When they get there, they start singing the Cal songs again, they meet the students, they hear the faculty. There's a rekindling of the loyalties, the interest, and being part of the University. We find that they become active in their local areas, in the club and scholarship programs. It plays a very important role in that regard.

Lair Impact on Development Program

Koll: Well, the question was, what impact would the Lair have on the Foundation, the development program, which I'm currently involved in. It's very important in development work that the University is well publicized and promoted in a very favorable manner. When you're talking to alumni, hopefully getting funds, the first thing you do is sell the University. Once you get people involved in the University, favorably impressed, then you're in a position to ask them for money.

The Lair has played a very important role in keeping people involved in University activities, creating a favorable impression of the University, its programs, the students and faculty. It all helps in fundraising. I've felt that there is a partnership between the association and the Development Office. The Lair has played a role in it. I know now when I go out, a number of the people that I call on are Lair people, and the minute I mention my name, they recognize my association with the Lair, and it enables me to start off on a very favorable level.

LaBerge: I think you're right. Just meeting faculty, seeing students, it makes a big impression whether other faculty members or students are like that. And you want to support the University.

Koll: That's right; you have a whole new feeling. I think another thing the Lair has done: the personal friendships and relationships that have been established at the Lair are almost unbelievable. It's a very special relationship. I can't really describe it. But I know people who meet at the Lair start forming lifelong associations. You may meet someone under

different circumstances, and that's fine, but you don't have the Lair feeling; it's almost a fraternal feeling that is developed. People will rush across the stadium floor at a football game to see someone from the Lair. If you see someone from the Lair, you stop immediately and you start talking. You always have something in common. But you have a feeling of belonging to something very special.

And the same way with the staff; they form lifelong friendships. I mentioned the marriages. And the friendships develop between the staff and the campers. It has been professionally advantageous for a number of our staff members. They have secured jobs through camp associations. Campers see an outstanding staff member who may be graduating in a year, and they'll talk to them about a job.

LaBerge: Anything more?

Koll: Well there are a couple of other little anecdotes.

LaBerge: Oh, good!

Staff Relationships and Anecdotes

Koll: The staff has always done a very good job of managing their own group, and peer pressures and peer activities have played an important role and have taken a lot of responsibilities away from the manager of the camp. One rather interesting experience happened a number of years ago. They had a staff member who was always late--she worked in the dining hall--always late coming to work. And her fellow staff members finally got fed up with it. So one morning they went to her tent--she was in her sleeping bag--and they picked her up in her sleeping bag and brought her to the dining hall and placed her on the front table.

She was in a very embarrassing situation as she was scantily clothed. She couldn't get out of her sleeping bag, so she had to stay there for about the first half of the breakfast. The staff finally took her back to her tent. Needless to say, she was always on time from then on.

LaBerge: Oh, that was very good.

Koll: Years ago, I know it was a surprise to me, I woke up one morning and there were horses and cattle all around the Camp Gold ballfield. I looked out, and there must have been about 250

cows, a dozen cowboys, and a cook wagon there. The cattle were feeding, and the cowboys were enjoying their breakfast. Campers were coming from all directions. The cowboys had driven the cattle through the camp to get out to the meadow.

We found that it was a pattern. For many, many years in the spring there had been a cattle drive up the mountains. They would come up from the Sonora area, drive their cattle to the mountains and into the back country, where they would spend the summer grazing. The Lair was one of their stopping points. So for about four or five years, it became one of our important activities for the early campers. The kids just loved to see live cowboys chasing cattle around. There was always a residue from the experience that we had to watch for. [laughter] But it was an interesting experience.

We used to supply staff members for a fire crew. When we were first there, the Forest Service did not have an organized fire crew. I'd had experience through my forestry background in fighting fires, and leading groups. They asked us if we would be a volunteer fire crew for them. If they had a forest fire and they needed staff we would be called. There was a big fire near Twain Harte. I took half a dozen of my staff members down there, and we worked on the fire lines. Time magazine was there taking pictures of it. They had heard about it as it was rather an extensive fire. The western edition of Time magazine had pictures of the fire, and our staff was featured in it, in all the pictures. Unknown to us, they just happened to shoot the scene where we were working. Of course it made a great stir in camp. All the staffers got a big kick out of it.

LaBerge: Do you know what year that was? Or what issue? You don't have a copy of it?

Koll: No, I don't. I should have. Now as I look back I wish I had kept them. One other experience. We had a fishing program at the Lair for a number of years. As I mentioned earlier, we would actually put a dam across the stream, and it was in violation of some of the Fish and Game rules. We had an old game warden who was very understanding. We always took it out at the end of the season and cleaned up any of the debris that may have been left in the creek. And he shared our feeling that it was a wonderful program for the kids. He was ill for a while, and a young, new warden came in to inspect us. And he worked by the book. He said, "Uh oh. You should not have that screen across the stream." He issued citations to our camp managers. We got notification that we were going to have to appear in court.

Bobby Tuck was one of the managers, and one of the campers at Camp Blue was Lincoln Mintz, who is one of the famous criminal attorneys in the Bay Area. Bob was telling him about it, and Lincoln said, "Well, let me handle it." So he picked up the phone and he called the district attorney's office in Sonora and asked about the citation. The man said, "Oh, yes. They'll have to appear in court." And Lincoln then identified himself, and there was sort of a gasp on the other end, and he said, "Well, I just wanted you to know that I'll be handling this case for them. So please send all correspondence in the future to me." At the end of the week we got a notification that the citation had been cancelled. [laughter]

LaBerge: That's wonderful.

Koll: He came to camp for many, many years, and really was a fine camper.

LaBerge: Was that the last year that you did that?

Koll: Yes, we had to give it up. One other event is in regards to Bob Albo. I'm a Rotarian, and I used to make up Rotary at Twain Harte. They had a little Rotary Club and they were very gung-ho. They were quite athletic and perhaps were a little overconfident in regards to their athletic abilities. We were talking about volleyball. They had a volleyball court and they thought they were pretty good at volleyball.

LaBerge: This is in Twain Harte?

Koll: Yes. During one of the meetings I told them, "Look. I'll challenge you. I'll bring one other person down, and we'll play you. And you can play as many or as few as you wish." Well, the word spread, and we were going to have this big game. So I brought Bob Albo down, who was an excellent volleyball player, could really jump. And so they started off with six members. The main thing I did was get the ball to Bob and let him spike it and put it away. And we virtually killed them, beat them by almost--.

LaBerge: The two of you beat them.

Koll: Two of us beat them. I said, "You can put eleven on the court if you wish." And they couldn't believe it. Actually, eleven is not as effective as six. So they put eleven on the court, and we beat them, just shut them out. There must have been a couple hundred of the local residents who saw it. They were quite embarrassed by it. And even to this day they still remember our coming down and beating them in that volleyball game. But it was

Bob who was so good; they had never seen anyone who could jump and spike the ball as well as he could. And it was a totally new type of game that they weren't used to playing.

LaBerge: So you really became involved in the local community while you were up there.

Koll: Very much so. I was a member of the Permitees Association. They are a board of directors for all the Pinecrest people who have a permit from the Forest Service; they're known as the Pinecrest Permitees Association. And for over twenty years I was one of the directors on it. It included one director who represented the organizational camps, and our camp was substantially larger than the others. You had to be elected. So at times it was contested, but we had a number of Cal people in the area and I continued to be reelected.

It was very important because they always looked at the Lair as the big operation, and wanted to increase our assessments for sewage and water. It was important that we kept it in balance. I wanted us to pay our fair share, but not to pay excessive amounts.

It was public relations. Each year I used to have the Permitees' directors over for a barbecue at the Lair. It was good public relations as it gave them a chance to see the operation and appreciate what we were doing. The same thing with the Forest Service; I used to work at improving our relationship with the Forest Service. Occasionally had them over, the ranger and others. Made an effort to get to know them and for them to know our operation. That was very important.

We used to speak occasionally at local meetings and at civic groups about the Lair. It played an important role in their economy. I think we created a very favorable impression in regards to our operation, and had a lot of civic support for it. It's interesting now, a number of our former staffers and campers have bought homes in the Pinecrest area because of their association at the Lair.

LaBerge: Does this still continue? Would Ray [Bosch] be a member of the--?

Koll: Ray just recently got to be a member of the board. He worked hard for it.

LaBerge: Any more anecdotes?

Koll: Those are the only ones I remember.

LaBerge: Maybe we'll close with that and then the next time we'll talk about the Alumni Association.

Koll: Yes. We'll talk about the Alumni Association, right. Good.

V CALIFORNIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

[Interview 6: February 13, 1992]##

Bob Sibley

LaBerge: Okay, you're going to start off.

Koll: Yes. A little bit of background. I think when talking about the [California] Alumni Association, it's very important to give credit to Bob [Robert] Sibley, who was the founder of the organization and did a superb job. As the story goes, and apparently it is true, Bob and a group of his classmates were celebrating after a very successful reunion which they had organized. They were talking about who was going to be in charge of the next one coming up in five years. None of the group were willing to volunteer to take on the responsibility; they were very busy in their professions. Finally Bob Sibley was talked into accepting the position.

They felt they should have someone working full time for their class and other classes, to promote reunions and other alumni-related activities. They passed the hat around the group present and collected a little over one hundred dollars, which was quite a bit of money in the early 1920s. They gave it to Bob to start the Alumni Association. He took the money and with a great deal of dedication and energy, and built a very successful organization.

One of the great strengths, I think, was the fact that Bob built it on a very sound financial basis. It was based primarily on the sale of life memberships. His idea was--and it was a very wise one--that forty-five dollars out of every life membership should be put into an endowment pool, and the interest would be there to service the memberships and provide a steady income for

the Alumni Association. In 1933 they formally launched a full life-membership campaign. They had eight salesmen who worked on a commission basis. They published a glorified alumni directory known as "The Golden Book." It was used as a sales incentive; anyone who bought a life membership got a copy of the book. They generated very substantial sales. Bob had built up the life membership numbers to 33,000 when he retired in 1948.

The endowment pool was in excess of one million dollars. The forty-five dollar investment program continued until the early 1950s, when money was needed to furnish the Alumni House. The association used the sales money and since then it's never been restored. However, the endowment pool, through appreciation, has grown to more than seven million dollars. It is a very sound financial basis for the Association, and it continues to provide a very good income source for them.

The programs that Bob initiated are thriving today, and one is the Alumni Scholarship Program. It was started in 1934. [President Robert Gordon] Bob Sproul and Bob Sibley were great friends and did a lot of traveling around the state together. They were concerned about the number of outstanding students who, for some reason or another, were not coming to Cal. They thought there should be incentive. It wasn't designed to be a full financial support program, but rather a recognition and incentive. They launched what they called the Alumni Scholarship Program.

The state was divided up then into thirteen districts. Each district was to award one scholarship. The recipient was supposed to have a basic, sound academic background, but primarily, leadership qualities were to be a determining factor. They selected thirteen scholars the first year and among them was Stan McCaffrey, who later played a very important role in the University and Alumni Association. Also Bud Hastings, who later became the director of the ASUC, a period when it controlled athletics and all the other student programs, and Ivor De Kirby, who later became a very active member in the Association.

When the students arrived at the campus, the districts had not been successful in their fundraising, so they did not have resources to award the promised two hundred dollar scholarship. So instead, the Alumni Association talked to the University and they agreed to give the scholarship recipients free board and room at Bowles Hall for a year. So in lieu of the promised money they received free board and room.

This program has grown very substantially over the years, and is one of the most important Alumni Association programs.

Now the association awards over six hundred scholarships per year, and the awards average \$650 per scholarship. It's provided a very substantial aid to students and it does attract a large group of outstanding leaders to the campus. It still follows the same premise: academic records are important, but leadership is more important. Financial need is not one of the essentials for receiving the scholarship, although the amount sometimes is varied, depending on the individual's need.

Bob Sibley also initiated a very strong Club program, which has been carried on throughout the years. He was interested in publications; he was an editor in his own right. The California Monthly was launched under his direction. In recognition of his great leadership in the field of alumni magazines, colleagues established the Sibley Award, which each year is given to the alumni magazine that has been voted by a group of judges as having done the best job in reporting for their association or campus.

LaBerge: Now is this just in California?

Koll: It's a national award. Of course, he was the starter of the Lair of the Golden Bear. Although unsuccessful as it was, it was his idea. Bob was a great visionary person. I might look out the window and see a tree, he would see a forest standing for miles. His ideas were not always very practical, but from them some great things did develop. He played a very important role in the success of the Association; when he left, it was regarded as one of the top alumni associations in the nation and it's a stature that it holds today.

Stan McCaffrey came in with a more practical viewpoint. A young, bright star who had come up through the University ranks as a Phi Beta Kappa, football and baseball player, president of the ASUC. Great things were expected of him, and Stan certainly fulfilled them as leader of the Alumni Association. He was a perfectionist, and the quality of our programming, everything, really moved forward under his direction. When I came on we actually had a very small staff. It was interesting, now we have a staff of around thirty-five people. When I arrived there were, I think, seven of us.

LaBerge: And you came in 1949?

Koll: Forty-nine, yes. We had an office space that was similar to this area. It had less square footage than they currently have in the lobby of the Alumni House. It was on the third floor of Eshleman Hall. But the good part about it was that all the coaches and ASUC officials were housed in the Eshleman court. The coffee

hour was a wonderful experience. We would go down and talk to all the coaches and the other administrators in the University. It was a great gathering point and exchanging of stories and ideas.

LaBerge: Well, going back to Bob Sibley, he really started the Alumni Association. What was his class? Do you know?

Koll: Class of 1903.

LaBerge: Okay. So before that there was no official anything. It was his class just happening to get together and meet.

Koll: Yes. Classes had their own structure; they had a class officer structure. The classes within that structure would carry on activities. But as far as an overall program, or overall direction, there was none.

LaBerge: So when he set this up, like with the \$100 or whatever, did he start the lifetime membership right away?

Koll: Actually he started it--I don't know the exact date, but it really took off--

LaBerge: Because \$45, it sounds like a lot for that--.

Koll: Yes. The membership sales, the price of it was originally \$50, a life membership. And \$45 of it went into the endowment.

LaBerge: Okay. So only \$5 were left over.

Koll: Yes. The price today is \$350 for a life membership. The price, obviously, over the years increased--I know when I came in it was about \$125, we were still then putting \$45 in the endowment. The balance of it, \$10 were going to the salesman who sold it.

The paid-salesmen program was discontinued in the fifties because the association was unable to attract top salespeople. The money that they would earn from the sales of the life memberships was not enough to support them, so they would have to take on other projects. The people who took the sales jobs were not particularly well qualified. They did not represent the University in the style in which many people desired. They made promises in making sales that were not realistic. The program just deteriorated. It had been very successful over the years and accomplished, really, its original goal.

LaBerge: So today it's just through word-of-mouth and through mailers?

Koll: Mailers, yes. Today there's an annual mailing that goes out to all nonmembers, and they're invited to take either an annual membership, which currently is \$35--I understand it's going to go up to \$40 in the spring--and a life membership, which is \$350. Again, you can pay it off or you can extend it over a pay-off period of about three years.

LaBerge: So when he set it up in the twenties, did he start off in Eshleman Hall?

Koll: I really don't know. He probably did not start out of Eshleman Hall, but I don't know where the original office was.

LaBerge: That's amazing, that it's grown so from one person.

Koll: Yes, that's why I say it's very important to give Bob credit, because he launched it into a very productive state. When Stan and all the rest of us came into it, we were able to build on a very strong foundation that he had established. And his dedication and loyalty to the institution was unbelievable. He was a great worker. He loved to talk about the love for the institution and the importance of it and what it had done for him and everyone associated with the University.

Relationship Between the Alumni Association and the University

LaBerge: Well, from the beginning, what was the relationship between this new Alumni Association and the University? Did they have to get approval?

Koll: The Alumni Association has always been a separate entity, a separate corporation. I don't know the exact date when it was formally recognized as a corporation, but it has been, and is totally self-supporting and self-governing. The primary purpose of the association, and must always be remembered, is to support the University. Although the Alumni Association has the option of taking a stand different from the University, I think it would be somewhat foolhardy and not serve the best interests to do it. I know in the past there have been occasions when they have had different opinions and discussed it with the Chancellor or the President, but they've never publicly come out in opposition to the official position.

I think it's given the association a great deal of credibility, that they're not a direct arm of the University. When they speak, they are speaking more from their own viewpoint

and supposedly representing several hundred thousand alumni. They are a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational corporation. It is very important because contributions are tax deductible. They established their own governing body.

LaBerge: Okay. Let's talk about that.

The Governing Board: Directors

Koll: It was originally known as the Alumni Council, and about three years ago it was changed to the Directors of the Alumni Association. They are now known as Directors.

LaBerge: I noticed that in the Cal Monthly. I had written down "Alumni Council," and I didn't see that anywhere.

Koll: Yes. They changed it. When I was there it was still a council, but they were talking about changing it because the alumni were not certain, "What does the council do? What does it mean?" They are the governing body of the association. It's comprised of a president, who has a two-year term, and it has three vice presidents, also a first vice president and a vice president of finance, and a secretary-treasurer. Those are the officers. The vice president serves a one-year term and the president serves for the two-year term. The secretary-treasurer serves at the pleasure of the council; it's a paid, full-time, staff position. It is part of the executive director's responsibilities.

LaBerge: Oh, it is. But the other positions are volunteer?

Koll: Volunteer, yes. And the president may serve only one two-year term. Vice presidents may be reelected up to three years. And the directors are elected. There are thirty of them, and they serve for a three-year term. They are not eligible for reelection until they've been out several years. Ten of them are elected each year, on staggered terms, so that there's not a great turnover.

Additionally, there are eighteen designated directors, and they serve by virtue of their position. They include the chair of the Young Alumni Council, the Athletic Director, the Chancellor, and a number of the presidents of the different professional alumni chapters on the campus. They serve one-year terms, but they can be reappointed.

The council meets approximately six times a year. Most of the business is conducted by the executive committee, which is comprised of the vice presidents and several other people that the president may wish to add to it, also the executive director.

LaBerge: So the meetings are held on the Berkeley campus.

Koll: Traditionally, most of them are held on the Berkeley campus, but we used to try and have one meeting a year in the Los Angeles area, to enable councillors from that area not having to travel. The elected council is selected--a nominating committee is appointed, about twelve people--

LaBerge: By the president?

Koll: By the president. It's approved then by the alumni council, and they in turn have a large list of people who have been nominated for positions on the council. They review the list and make a very concerted effort to have the council represent a good cross section of the alumni body in regards to age, to geographic location, ethnic backgrounds, profession--all are taken into consideration. And once they have prepared a slate--they also have a first choice and then an alternate for the ten positions--it's presented to the alumni council and if approved, it's posted in the California Monthly. The membership at large has the option of preparing and presenting an opposing slate. They need one hundred signatures. In reality it's never been done. After a certain period of time the slate of councillors are declared elected. Their term starts July 1 and goes for three years.

LaBerge: How does the president pick the nominating committee?

Koll: Again, he tries to get a cross section. The chairman must have served previously on the nominating committee and be familiar with procedures. Most members are former alumni councillors or represent a specific cross section of the alumni body.

LaBerge: So they have a sense of what kind of person is needed and what's going on?

Koll: They have a complete background. Presented at their meetings is a background of those going off, and the geographic locations, the numbers of alumni in different areas, with maps and charts. It takes them a couple of days to come up with a slate; it's a very thorough process.

LaBerge: Now how involved were you in all of that when you were--well, before you were executive director or when you were executive director?

Koll: I used to nominate a number of people whom I had worked with.

LaBerge: Did you submit the names?

Koll: Submit the names and biographical background to this pool--there are about two hundred names in it and my endorsement--and it would be reviewed. Interesting enough, well before I became executive director they decided that the executive director could not participate at any of the deliberations that took place in regards to the nominations. I think it was a very good idea, because previously executive directors had tried to push through their own slate.

The executive director is present and opens the meeting with a bit of discussion, and then retires to his office, and is available for consultation. Committee members may come in and want additional information about some of the candidates or the rules or procedures. But you do not participate in the actual selection.

LaBerge: Well, I would think, just from your experience going around the state to the different clubs and from the Lair, that you'd know more people.

Koll: You're right, I did. I knew more people than any of those participating. In fact, once or twice I've been credited with knowing more alumni than any person in the country, from all my contacts. [laughter] But it was very helpful, and I was able over the years, I think, to nominate some very good people. Those that were being considered came from a variety of sources. Of course many came up through the ranks; some had been very active in the club and scholarship programs.

Role of the President of the Alumni Association

Koll: But others, because of their particular position in business or society, it was felt important to have them on the board of directors, that they would bring a very special quality to the board. A prime example is Walter Hoadley, who was not active in any of the clubs or scholarship programs prior to coming on to the directors and then serving as president, and he did an outstanding job.

LaBerge: Did he just retire?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And he was, for example, a businessperson?

Koll: Yes, a businessperson who was prominent in San Francisco circles. He was president of the Commonwealth Club and a world-recognized economist and was on television and gave a lot of talks and was a world-renowned person. The president serves on the Board of Regents. For the two years the president would attend the meetings, the first year as a Regent-designate, but does not have a vote. The second year they have a vote.

Originally, this representation was between UCLA and Berkeley, and we would alternate. The alumni president of both the alumni associations would be on the board; one would be voting one year and the other would be designate, and then alternate. Later, when the other campuses became more established, they protested against this particular representation and felt it should be broadened.

There was not a great willingness from either Berkeley or UCLA to give up their representation, so they went to the state and had another seat established. The seat rotates among the other campuses. Berkeley and UCLA still maintain their presence on the Board of Regents.

LaBerge: Still as a rotating thing, every other year?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: So when the president does have a vote, is it as equal as everybody else's on the Board of Regents?

Koll: I'd say it's probably more important than most of the others, because they are speaking for an alumni body--probably over a million when you include all the campuses, and most of our alumni are in the state of California--the vote carries substantial weight. It should be listened to, because it is a grassroots reaction to whatever is being proposed or considered. I think obviously, the individual characteristics of the person who assumes that position may have some impact on how successful or how well their opinions are taken by the rest of the board. We've had some very strong alumni presidents and others who, I don't think, have been strong in the Board of Regents.

LaBerge: I suppose it depends, too, on the state of the world and what the issues are.

Koll: What the issues are, correct.

LaBerge: Because some years there have been turbulent times.

Koll: Right. And interestingly, to date we've only had one Alumni Association President--Shirley Conner--who was a woman. I think that's going to change very quickly. I think there are a number of outstanding women who are coming up through the ranks who will be seriously considered.

LaBerge: How much time does being alumni president take?

Koll: Almost full time.

LaBerge: It's not a paid position, is it?

Koll: No, it's not a paid position. An alumni president puts in a lot of time. A councillor for three years, perhaps vice president for at least two or three years, president-designate for one year, and then a two-year presidency. You're talking about eight or nine years that they have devoted to the Alumni Association and the University. The last two years, when they're serving as president, there are so many events to attend: meetings, social events, official events, and then with the Regents, they put in a great deal time.

LaBerge: In a lot of ways it's good they have the preparation and they know what they're getting into before they--.

Koll: It's very important that they have the background. The president is elected by the council.

LaBerge: Is it usually the first vice president?

Koll: It's quite likely a chair position that moves into being selected as the president-designate. They're elected first as president-designate and then automatically go into the presidency the following year. But you're right, it certainly puts them in a spotlight where they have a chance to demonstrate their leadership qualities.

It's contested; there are usually two or three members that run for it. It isn't automatic. We had some strongly contested elections. One vote has settled it on several occasions.

LaBerge: Wow. In most associations like this people don't want it. And so whoever's been selected--.

Koll: It's a very prestigious position. Being on the Board of Regents has a great deal of appeal. I understand it is the most coveted state-appointed position in California.

LaBerge: Have you ever been on the alumni council or the board of directors? Or can't you if you have a paid position?

Koll: No. If you're paid staff you cannot. I've been an officer. The executive director is an officer, and I served of course on the executive committee. But you cannot be a regular member of the council.

LaBerge: So have you attended Regents' meetings? Or not?

Koll: Yes, I have attended Regents' meetings. Not in an official capacity, but as an interested staff person. And I know a number of the Regents. In fact, one of my more interesting experiences occurred when I was with the Alumni Association. Traditionally, our outgoing president entertains the Regents. The Regents have entertained the president on a number of occasions. We were scheduled to have an event at the Alumni House hosted by our retiring president for the Board of Regents. It just so happened there was a caterers' strike the day before, and everything was tied up.

The question was whether we would go ahead or not. We decided to go ahead, that we would put on the dinner. My responsibility--I was to barbecue New York steaks for all the Regents. It was a lot of fun because they were wonderful people. They understood the problems and they would come out and chat and help with the barbecue. It was one of the more enjoyable experiences that I had.

LaBerge: It probably was much less formal, and it made everybody more comfortable.

Koll: It was. It was very informal and everybody just had a delightful time.

LaBerge: Now how did you end up with that job?

Koll: Well, I had barbecued a lot, and no one else was interested in doing it. [laughter] I was quite willing because I had barbecued at a number of events.

LaBerge: It wasn't part of your job description?

Koll: No. [laughter] You'll find in all your work there are many things you are called upon to do that are not written into your job description. No, I used to have a lot of fun. Traditionally, when I was there, I would barbecue for the staff once in the spring. Frequently it would be venison or elk, because I do a lot of hunting. It was quite a delightful experience. For the Lair staff for many years I would barbecue at the final staff party at the end of the season.

Purposes

LaBerge: Well, when the Alumni Association was first started by Robert Sibley, and then in the following years, what do you think the purposes were? What did they have in mind, and how has that grown?

Koll: The primary purpose, I think, was to form a support group for the University, and that has prevailed throughout the years. And occasionally, I have had a difference of opinion with some of our presidents. They have felt the primary purpose should be to provide services to the membership, with the University being secondary. I feel that's a mistake. To keep people involved and dedicated and excited about participating, I think the main thrust must be for the University.

To be a self-serving membership organization, I think, loses a great deal of appeal. Certainly as far as the University administration is concerned, they would view the Alumni Association quite differently if its primary thrust was service to their own membership rather than for the support of the University.

Once the association became established they wanted to expand beyond their reunion program. The idea of a club structure started to emerge--

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LaBerge: Okay. We were talking about the beginning of the Alumni Club structure.

Koll: Club structure. First they wanted to go to different communities and have the president and the executive director and faculty members speak to alumni. Originally they would just single out some alumnus in the area to serve as the chairman and host the

event. And as it grew, they decided they needed more of a formal structure, and started plans to have clubs in different areas where there were enough alumni located to support it. They would have an officer structure and a board of directors. The club would meet once or twice a year and the Alumni Association would provide programming for them. Basically, the association would pay for the expenses of the speakers and the mailings. It was hoped that the local alumni club would be able to provide for the additional expenses through their own resources.

Alumni Scholarship Program

Koll: As the scholarship program grew, it was incorporated into the club structure. Sometimes it was definitely part of it, other occasions it was a special activity within the area. Members of the club would participate on the scholarship committee. One of the interesting aspects of the scholarship program was the fact that the local committees actually made the selection of the recipients. Applications came to the Alumni Association office. There they would be sorted per district and then they would be forwarded back to the districts. The Alumni Scholarship Committee would call in the students to interview them and decide who was to receive the alumni scholarship.

Originally they had the sole responsibility--oh, I should correct that--they had the major responsibility of raising the money to support the scholarships. The scholarships were about \$250. The Regents, once the program was well established, put up \$20,000 per year in matching funds. The Alumni Association divided the twenty thousand up among the districts and required that the district raise a matching portion of it. This expanded the program substantially.

LaBerge: So none of the funds come from the main endowment program or anything.

Koll: No. Later on, the Alumni Association was interested in developing a fund-raising program. The [Alumni] Foundation originally was part of the Alumni Association. The University decided that it was a disadvantage to have these individual fund-raising campaigns that were carried on by the districts while the University was trying to have a statewide fund-raising campaign. They made an agreement that the Foundation would supply \$60,000 a year for alumni scholarships with the understanding that the local districts then would discontinue their individual fund-raising programs.

LaBerge: Would discontinue?

Koll: Discontinue, yes, so there wouldn't be the competition.

LaBerge: And when you're talking about the Foundation, is this the Alumni Foundation or the Berkeley Foundation?

Koll: Well, we started out as the Alumni Foundation and then the title was changed to the Berkeley Foundation and resources transferred to the University.

LaBerge: Okay, so it's the same.

Koll: The same one, it's merely a new name. Our first fund raiser was David Gardner, who is currently President of the University.

LaBerge: Right. I'd like to talk about him either now or later, because in the Robert Sproul oral history¹ he has a short interview just on that period of time in his life.

Koll: I would be glad to because I knew David very well. Perhaps we'll do it a little later.

LaBerge: Yes.

Koll: I had a close personal relationship with him. In the first fund-raising program they raised \$40,000 from just a mailer.

LaBerge: We're talking about the Berkeley Foundation now? Or the Alumni Clubs?

Koll: No, the Foundation. But later it grew to raise substantial sums well beyond the monies that were provided for the scholarship program. The scholarship program continued to grow and one of the accomplishments, which I feel quite good about, is in regards to the fiftieth anniversary of the alumni scholarship program. It was started in 1934, so we're talking about '84. Our council members were giving some thought to what we should do to celebrate this great accomplishment. They were talking of having a dinner or some other special event. I felt we should do something more significant.

¹See David P. Gardner, "Associations with and Observations of President Sproul", in the Robert Gordon Sproul Oral History, Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1986.

So I suggested that we have a campaign to endow the alumni scholarship program, at least in part. They suggested to me \$250,000 and I suggested \$1 million. They thought it was somewhat unrealistic, but were willing to give it a chance. We went all out and we raised \$4 million. It was one of the more exciting accomplishments that I've been a part of. But there are many people who are very supportive of the scholarship program and are involved in it.

One of the great things, we provided people an opportunity to endow scholarships for \$10,000 or more in names of individuals. The idea was well received; we have a number of endowed scholarships. In fact, today it has continued to grow and there are perhaps one hundred endowed scholarships. The scholarship is a very important program and I hope to see it continue to grow. I know our goal used to be one thousand scholarships at \$1,000 each. It hasn't reached the goal yet, but I think in the near future it will.

LaBerge: Particularly with the fees going up, it will be more important.

Koll: It is. It will be greatly needed. It was expanded; originally it was just for incoming freshmen. Then it was expanded to include incoming junior college transfers and a continuing alumni scholarship was added. If you came to campus on an alumni scholarship as a freshman, in your sophomore, junior, and senior years you could apply for a continuing scholarship. And again, it is based upon your leadership role on the campus. The numbers were substantially reduced, but there are several hundred continuing alumni scholarships given each year. I think it was an excellent addition to the program.

One thing that used to bother me in regard to the scholarship program was the fact that a number of our alumni scholars were not very active once they left the campus. I felt they should have a continuing interest in the program. I felt it was basically our fault that they weren't. We weren't singling them out enough, to make them feel a special group or special importance to the University and the Association. A couple things happened.

Number one, we started the Alumni Scholarship Club on the campus, a formal organization, and invited all the alumni scholars to participate. There were a variety of activities. I must confess that I barely got it off the ground, but since then it has grown into a very fine organization. The only credit I can take is having, probably, the initial idea.

LaBerge: But that's all it takes. They meet about three times a year?

Koll: No, they'll have a dozen meetings probably, with all kinds of activities, some social, some academic, some with speakers, fund raising; they do all kinds of things to get the students involved. They publish a little newsletter and it's really a good, ongoing organization. I thought that was very important.

The other thing that I learned from attending a number of conferences was the fact that just giving out a check for a scholarship does not build loyalty.

LaBerge: That's right!

Koll: In fact, there's almost a negative response, so I felt we had to personalize it. We had all the checks presented at the Alumni Association office. One of my staff people always gave them out and would talk to the person before giving them the check. Find out how they were doing, show a little personal interest in them, hoping to establish more than just a cash relationship. I think it's helped some; at least the idea is sound.

LaBerge: Well, it gives them an introduction to the Alumni Association before they're ready to join themselves, even to know where the Alumni House is.

Building Alumni House

Koll: That's very important, and you know, too often we assume students are familiar with the Alumni Association program. Many studies have been done, indicating if you stop students in the middle of campus and ask them where the Alumni House is and what are the Alumni Association activities, only one in three at the most will be able to give you an intelligent answer. Despite all of the things that you do, trying to bring them in--.

That was one of the big concerns that we had in the location of the Alumni House originally. We wanted it somewhere in the middle of the traffic patterns. It has worked out fairly well because the [Harmon] gymnasium is used for registration, and finals or other activities, so students go back and forth. I must say unfortunately during the sixties and seventies a lot of students used to parade by on their way from Sproul Plaza to Callahan Hall. That wasn't the kind of attention we wanted.
[laughter]

But it has worked out. I think we're very accessible to students, and I think that's important. We try and schedule a number of student activities at the Alumni House. We have our staff people going out and participating on student boards, trying to make students realize that we're not just for alumni; we're also interested in students.

LaBerge: When did the Alumni Association build the Alumni House?

Koll: In the very early 1950s the association talked about having a structure of our own. I mentioned earlier, we were in very cramped quarters and there was no opportunity to expand. So the idea of the Alumni House was developed. It was a rather new idea, because very, very few--I think only a half a dozen schools, at the most, in the nation had alumni houses at that time. A lot of thought went into it.

Fortunately, a very fine architect from San Francisco by the name of Clarence Mayhew, Cal alumnus, was hired to develop plans for the house. The University was very supportive of the idea. The area where the Alumni House was located was occupied by an old building; it used to be a social science building, and there were a couple of play courts. There was a tennis backboard, horseshoe pits and a few other things, but it was an unoccupied area. The University agreed to let the Alumni Association build a house on the area.

The Alumni Association agreed to raise the funds for the house, but it would be deeded to the Regents because it was on University property, but we would have priority in its occupancy. It presented an interesting challenge and I was involved in it. I was the staff person working with the fund-raising efforts. Fortunately we had Stephen Bechtel, Sr. as our chair, a very powerful person, plus a committee of other business people and alumni supporters. We canvassed the whole state.

It was a rather unusual fund-raising program because traditionally, big gifts constitute the major portion of any campaign. Well, the largest gift we had was \$25,000; our total project was \$375,000. You wouldn't be able to build much of an Alumni House today for \$375,000, it would take three or four million. But it was a sizeable sum in the fifties. We had 18,000 donors. We got a large number of small gifts, and finally they all added up to the total goal.

One of the more interesting things, we had a donor book that listed everyone who gave, and the book is still in the Alumni House. Today people come in to check to see if their name is in that donor book. We got a few memorial gifts for the alumni

lounge area, one class gave a fireplace, a couple of fireplaces were donated by individuals. Many gifts were in the five and ten thousand dollar category.

It was really quite an accomplishment. It dramatically changed the Alumni Association, once we had that facility of our own. It gave us a recognition, an identity, a stature that we had not previously enjoyed. It was quite a thrilling experience. If you look at it today, how well everything has grown up around it in contrast to when we moved in there, they were just sparsely planted. I had a number of our Lair maintenance crew people working on it. We raked the front and back of the Alumni House for the dedication. There was no planting or grass. Later it was seeded and over the years, the trees and the shrubbery grew and how beautiful the landscape is today.

It's been very functional. Thousands of people, students, faculty, alumni, use it each year. It's been the parlor of the campus for a number of years. It's where many of the dignitaries are brought for a reception. Particularly, during the times when the University House was not available.

LaBerge: Well I've been there both for memorial services, to give blood, I mean, a wide variety--.

Koll: Of uses, yes. [laughter] And of course the meetings of the board are held there and many other functions.

LaBerge: So when you were involved in fund-raising for that, you were doing the Lair in the summer and year round. But is this mainly what you did during the year?

Koll: During the fall and winter and off-time. I also had the club programs.

LaBerge: Would you do that in conjunction?

Koll: Well, I'd say the fund raising had top priority. I worked with the clubs when I had additional time. But it was only about a year when we were fully involved with it. We came down to the final weeks and we still needed \$25,000 more to reach our goal. John Tetley, who was heading up the fund raising for us, and I called on Steve Bechtel, Sr., in San Francisco. We told him that we needed \$25,000 more. He said, "Let me help you." He had made a gift of the \$25,000 for the Bechtel Room, named in his honor. He picked up the phone, he made five phone calls, and each time he said, "Look. Yes, I need five thousand. Remember, I helped you on this? Now it's your turn to help me." With five calls he raised \$25,000 as the climax to our successful campaign. When he

got through he said, "I've given them a lot more than that. They got off easy." [laughter] But it was rather exciting because it represented to us a lot of money.

LaBerge: Well, it meant you could complete the project.

Koll: Complete the project, yes. The only thing we didn't have was for furnishings, and I mentioned that we borrowed money from the endowment funds. It provided the furnishings for the Alumni House. That established a precedent. From then on, no additions were made to the endowment. Now of course there is talk about having to expand Alumni House to accommodate the additional staff and uses. It would involve a campaign, but I don't see it on the immediate horizon.

LaBerge: Is there space there?

Koll: There are many different ideas. One is to move it, which I think would be a mistake. Another, the front where the ivy is, could be incorporated into a building structure and some of the back areas could also be incorporated into a building structure. Going up, one or two stories could be added to the current structure. It was originally designed so it would support a second story over the office wing.

Fund Raising

LaBerge: Now when you started fund raising for that, had you ever done fund raising?

Koll: No.

LaBerge: How did you proceed? How did you know what to do?

Koll: We had a technical advisor, John Tetley, who had experience. He was in charge. I was the one who would open the doors for him with our alumni. I knew the people. I would be able to introduce him and give him background on the people he was calling on and help him in that regard. I didn't actually do any of the asking for money, but merely helping with the arrangements and the planning of the schedules.

LaBerge: Now since then, though, do you fund raise? Or you have since then?

Koll: I did, yes. Well, first in the raising of the \$4 million for the alumni scholarship endowment. I took a very active role in the fund raising, and I raised quite a bit of it personally. Also, I initiated an annual giving program for alumni scholarships. That was a delightful experience because we had a goal the first year of \$50,000; we raised almost \$100,000. And since then, each year it has been growing, and when I left we were up over \$200,000. That was accomplished by a couple of mailers going to our association members.

LaBerge: Well, I know people from our office have been involved in the alumni scholarship program. I mean, they've gone and interviewed people on campus. How do you pick people to interview?

Koll: In the outlying areas it's done by the club, they pick the people. It's a very coveted position. People enjoy being on scholarship committees. The problem is to get movement, to get new people on the committees. The committee members want to hold their position because it is really an exciting experience: talking to the young people and to learn of their great aspirations and abilities. Here on the campus for the continuing scholarship program, we do the interviews at Alumni House. People are brought in who have a background--either former alumni scholars or have been associated with the program, and able to recognize the qualities that should be rewarded. The people come from the surrounding areas, Sacramento, San Francisco and different local areas; they would look forward to participation on the committees.

Workings of the Alumni Directors

LaBerge: Getting back to one of the other things we were talking about, with alumni council or directors, how much power does each person have? How are the decisions made?

Koll: Well, within the council, the executive committee handles most of the financial affairs. They make recommendations and the council has the final approval. But within the council itself there are a number of committees. Almost every major activity has a committee that helps determine the policy and direction and assists in the management of that particular program. I'm thinking of the scholarship program, the club program, the travel program, the student recruitment program. We also have a minority relations program.

All the different activities have a committee. They work and have meetings separate from that of the council meetings. They plan programs for the year and give reports to the council. They present financial requests to the council, and they critique the programs at the end of the year. Generally, they deal with the policy management of their programs.

I think that it's important to establish that the directors are policy managers and the staff are the actual line managers. Sometimes it's difficult to maintain that line. When it's breached, I think it interferes with the organization.

LaBerge: When you're talking about staff, you mean Alumni Association--.

Koll: Staff, paid staff.

LaBerge: Do you have any anecdotes about how any of that's worked? Any unusual situations?

Koll: I have to think about that a bit more, come back to it. Yes, there should be a number of them that are interesting.

LaBerge: Just like your story of calling Stephen Bechtel to get the extra \$25,000. At one point you mentioned that you helped get the Davis Alumni Association started. Maybe the others, too.

Alumni Associations on Other Campuses

Koll: We were at one time the only Alumni Association in the University system. Of course, when UCLA became established, they quickly formed their own association. But the other smaller campuses--we're talking about Davis and Santa Barbara--didn't have enough financial resources or alumni to really support an organization. So we were serving their needs as well. And it was to our benefit, too, because we were selling memberships to their graduates; we got the money.

It was a joint loyalty because a number of students took the first two years at the Berkeley campus and then went to the Davis campus for their specialization in the agricultural fields. We had a large number of members with joint allegiance. Davis, as it grew, wanted to form its own alumni association. We were very supportive and agreed that for any person who had any allegiance to Davis, we would annually give to them the amount of money that the \$45 was earning in our endowment pool. It gave them some financial support.

I was the liaison between the Berkeley Alumni Association and Davis. I used to attend their meetings. Howard Schontz, who was a head of the Admissions Office in Davis, was the leader for Davis. Davis did not have any paid staff people. The organization was launched and became stronger. As they grew stronger, they wanted to establish more of their own identity. A request was made that for all the people who had the allegiance to Davis, we would transfer the \$45 endowment to the Davis Alumni Association. It would give them a financial basis. And we did.

Over a three-year period we gave the Davis people the option. A mailer was sent to everyone who had a Davis association, asking if they wished to stay with Berkeley, or if they wished to have their \$45 transferred. And I must confess, I think there was a very active campaign among the Davis people to get their alumni to make the transfer. It was logical for them to do so. Actually, some took out dual memberships. It provided a start for their organization. Today they have an excellent alumni association.

Santa Barbara did not have an alumni association. The University moved to the Goleta campus. Previously the campus was at a state teachers' college site. It became a full-fledged campus on their Goleta site. We again made an attempt to serve their alumni needs, but it was not a logical union. It was so far removed from the Berkeley campus and actually their allegiance probably would have been stronger to UCLA than ours. After a couple of years we discontinued it. We gave them some financial support, but we got very few people who were interested in joining our association. It was several years later before they were able to start their own alumni association. Again, today they have a very fine alumni association.

All the campuses have their own alumni association. We are the most independent. Most of the other campuses get support from the University. Most of their staff people are University-paid employees, and some of the services that they perform are being reimbursed by the University. But we have maintained our own identity, our own support, and we are probably the most self-supporting alumni association in the nation. I know UCLA gets from the University a couple million dollars in support each year.

LaBerge: Oh, really. From the campus?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Well, that speaks of how important the Association is to the University itself.

Legislative Relations

Koll: The Alumni Association has a very vital role to play for any educational institution. They're involved in many things. Our association, I think, has done a very fine job in regard to legislative relations. It is a very important activity. It's so important that there's been a statewide organization established, and each legislator is assigned to one campus, depending on who has the strongest contact with them.

LaBerge: Each legislator.

Koll: Each legislator.

LaBerge: So that the Berkeley campus has several.

Koll: Oh, yes, we'll have several dozen. The larger campuses obviously have a larger number of legislators. During the year you're supposed to make some contact with them and keep in touch. Once a year they have a statewide program where all the alumni associations furnish delegates to a gathering in Sacramento and make a personal call on a specific legislator. All those assigned to the Berkeley campus, we would find an alumnus who has a direct contact or tie with them, and then get them to call on that particular legislator. Again, just as a social call, but let them know that they are interested in discussing some of the issues that are before them. I'm sure this year there will be some rather interesting discussions in regards to student fees and financial support.

Well, that's been helpful and very important. In times of crises, when the University is facing a particularly severe issue, they would call and ask us to locate people who have a contact with the committee. Again, just call to their attention our concern; you can't force the legislator to make a decision, but you can explain our position and the importance of it. Also, make certain they are aware of all the facts when they make their final decision.

I think the association has played a very important role over the years in passing a bond issue, which has been frequent over the last several years. This structure plays a very

important role in raising money to carry on the lobbying program, you may wish to call it, or promotional program.

LaBerge: Could you go into more detail on that? What would you do when a bond is coming up for a vote?

Koll: There are several things that we would do. Number one, of course, they hire some professional promotional people. Each campus is assigned a certain amount of money to raise in support of their share of the professional people's expense. In addition, we would have our own campaigns. In the California Monthly we would run a full story on the issue, what was involved and the importance of it. When we went out to our club meetings, it would be a topic that we would discuss with the people in attendance. We would print literature, brochures and leaflets, that we would hand out to people to take and give to others. We would contact newspapers and hopefully get them to run an editorial or story on it. Those are some of the things that we would do.

LaBerge: And how involved were you in that kind of thing?

Koll: I would help line up the delegates--

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LaBerge: Okay, we were talking about the bond efforts and how involved you were in--.

Koll: In legislative relations, yes. My first experience with it goes back, a few years after I had joined the association. Jim Corley was the lobbyist for the University at Sacramento. My responsibility was to work with Jim when he brought legislators to the campus. I would help arrange the meetings with the faculty and the programming, the tours, and so on. I would be sure that they would have a chance to see the area of the campus that was of particular interest to them. Later on it became more sophisticated; when I became executive director, it was a major involvement.

I established our first legislative committee and its programming, and hired a staff person to run it. I helped line up the delegates and would personally arrange our day in Sacramento, including the calls that were to be made and the program that we were to have. The night before, we'd gather and have a program for all of our delegates. The following night we would have a big dinner, and we would have the Chancellor and a number of the legislators present. The programming of those events was my personal responsibility. I felt it was vital.

Obviously other staff members participated, but it was my responsibility to see that it came off successfully.

LaBerge: So was this your idea? To get the legislative committee together and to have delegates?

Koll: No. I carried out the council's directions. I played a role in formulating the programming, but certainly it initially came from the council.

LaBerge: Do you know about what year this was?

Koll: Well, it has been going on a few years. Let's see. It had been going on for about fifteen years, but I took it over in '84. I tried to refine it and expand and improve it.

The Free Speech Movement, 1964-65

LaBerge: I was wondering if it had been in existence for instance, before the Free Speech Movement, or if it was an outgrowth of that?

Koll: We didn't have an organized program at that time. There was a lot of individual involvement, but it was not an organized program. And if we wish to talk about the Free Speech Movement, that was a rather difficult time for the Alumni Association.

LaBerge: Should we go into that now or later?

Koll: We can probably just get that.

LaBerge: Okay, let's do that.

Koll: When the first confrontation took place on the campus, it took all of us quite by surprise, because we had never experienced anything like it. Certainly the administration was equally surprised and not prepared to handle it. We weren't sure what was taking place. The criticism was generally directed from all corners of the alumni at the campus. They felt it was campus-centered, originated on the Berkeley campus and perhaps sponsored by people on the Berkeley campus. But in reality, I think, a receptive mood prevailed, but it was led by organizers who really had no cause at heart. They were revolutionists in their own right and wanted to create problems.

I think the biggest mistake that our administration made was feeling that they could negotiate with these people in a logical,

reasonable manner. They soon found out that whenever they compromised on an issue, another issue was brought forth with which they had to be concerned or compromised. There was no end to what the demands were going to be, and there was no end to the turmoil that took place. It became very physical and very time-consuming.

They would rally at Sproul Plaza at noon, and many times make a trek past the Alumni House over to Callahan Hall, which was the military headquarters. They proceeded to break windows and do all kinds of destructive things. Then they would go on down to Telegraph Avenue or Bancroft Avenue and continue their outrageous behavior. It was interesting, because there was almost a standard format. There was never a protest before eleven o'clock, and at two o'clock they concluded the protest so students involved could go back to their classes.

I used to observe that around eleven o'clock there were a lot of cars coming into the area from outside. And when you analyzed the groups that were participating, the students weren't that numerous. There were high school students, there were people who were professional protestors, there were people who just had concerns, all included in the group. It was a great way for a number of people to be destructive without being singled out and prosecuted for it.

But as far as the campus, it had a very disruptive effect upon it. It was difficult to maintain classes; a number of the faculty joined the protest. There was really a chaotic condition. Attempts to move ahead with the educational process wasn't really happening.

Of course, our alumni were very disturbed by it. They wanted to know what was going on at Berkeley and why we were allowing Communists to run the campus. I took a lot of speakers out to alumni gatherings, and I have never sensed such hostility as we experienced at many of the gatherings. I remember going in to San Diego; Adrian Kragen and [Earl] Bud Cheit were our speakers. Jane was with me. We didn't get two feet in the door before we were cornered. We basically backed to the wall and put our backs together and defended ourselves from people who were deeply disturbed. The meeting proceeded in that same vein. I know Adrian Kragen and Vice Chancellor Bud Cheit had a difficult time getting their message across. The opinions were made up, and they were not going to be changed by any logical approach to the issues. It was an emotional response by alumni.

I know one time I took Chancellor Roger Heyns to Bakersfield, and he experienced exactly the same hostility and

concern--you could call it concern, but it was more emotional hostility. They felt that the administration was letting the University go down the tubes by a group of people with a very destructive agenda. Our Alumni Club program virtually came to a halt. We recruited a panel of speakers from the University that we would take out. We just took them out on every occasion that was available, whether it was a service club or whether it was a group of alumni. We were trying to get the message out to people that this issue was well beyond the campus; it was a national issue.

Fortunately, down the road people began to realize that the issue was greater than just the Berkeley campus, that other universities were experiencing some of the same problems. Unfortunately, we were the first, as has always been the case at Berkeley; whether good or bad, we seem to be first. So we had to deal with that.

I know we got a large number of calls for advice. Our Dean of Students [Arleigh Williams] was telling us about a year later he got this frantic call from Harvard [University]. The Dean of Students there called and said, "What do I do?" He said, "My office is filled with protesting students. They shut off the door and the phone and I can't operate. What did you do when it happened?"

LaBerge: Is this Arleigh Williams?

Koll: Yes. [laughter] So he laughed and tried to explain to them. But speaking of Arleigh Williams, it had a very destructive effect on him. He was so conscientious and he just couldn't leave it. Day and night, he was on the phone or worried about it. It bothered him deeply to see students react as they did, and the University be chastised as it was. Things that he loved and cherished were being presented in a different vein than what he would have liked. It had an emotional impact on him; I don't think he ever recovered from it.

LaBerge: You know, I interviewed him, and the bulk of the interview¹ was on that subject. It was very difficult for him to talk. We had to kind of get ready to talk about it. It was hard for him to go through it again.

¹Arleigh Williams, Dean of Students Arleigh Williams: The Free Speech Movement and the Six Years' War, 1964-1970, Regional Oral History Office, University of California, Berkeley, 1990.

Koll: It was a difficult time for everybody, and it divided a lot of the faculty. But the only good thing, and looking at the Alumni Association, something I felt, it brought a large number of alumni out of the woodwork. They were angry, they weren't happy, but at least they could be identified. We then had an opportunity, following the tapering off of the protests, to bring them back into the fold. We had their attention; there was no question about it. They also had our attention. But it was a chance for us to bring messages to them. We had a revival of our Alumni Club program, although some areas have never fully recovered.

It was interesting, just this past week, when I was in Fresno, this issue came up. Some of the older alumni were still concerned about the Free Speech Movement on the Berkeley campus. They've never really fully recovered or changed their viewpoints. They haven't been back to the campus. They haven't had the opportunity to know the students of today, what the University is doing, its programming, and to appreciate the positive influence we have on society. Or to put into perspective that particular period which was so unpleasant for all of us. To realize the great concerns were about the war conditions, our being involved in the Vietnam struggle, and the moral issues. It wasn't a campus-oriented problem.

LaBerge: It is so different to look back on this and then to live through it. I mean, for you, even. It's not like you were out there protesting, but people would attack you as if you were responsible.

Koll: Yes, "Why don't you do something about it?" "Fire them, kick them off the campus," was the big demand. They felt that it was a simple issue that could be handled. I don't know, I've often wondered what would have happened if we'd had strong leadership at the start of it, if they would have been able to put it down and keep it off the campus. That's something that I guess will never be resolved.

Certainly Clark Kerr took a great deal of abuse over his handling of it. There was a great concern, alumni felt that he was not firm enough, strong enough. Arbitration was one of his professions, and he felt, as an arbitrator, that he would be able to solve it in a logical manner, but it was not possible. I don't know, if someone like Bob Sproul was to go down on the steps and tell them to stop, if that would have stopped them or whether it would have inflamed it greater, none of us will know.

I think the procedure that has developed from all the experience is basically to ignore them. Today, occasionally we have protests; we've had them frequently throughout the nation, not only on this campus, but in the nation. They've adopted what I think is the most successful tactic, just let them protest. Allow them to have their say and don't bring in a lot of press, it just prolongs it. If it has good causes, it can be met, but if it's a general protest, let it die its natural death and conduct business as usual.

LaBerge: From your own personal perspective, how did you think it was handled?

Koll: I thought it could have been handled more forcefully. I think we tried too long to negotiate. I think at an earlier date we should have recognized the forces that we were dealing with and been better prepared. I've been involved in some protests since then, and the planning that has gone on has really prevented them from getting any great foothold. There was no pre-planning, there was no meeting of the minds on the campus, rallying together to consider the issues, deciding the best procedure and how to proceed. It was very fragmented, and that led to problems. I think it could have been handled better. I think we would have had less continuation of the horrible scenes that took place, less national attention and the disillusionment of many alumni could have been kept at a minimum.

LaBerge: How did you keep up your spirits during that? That must have been very difficult, to just stay on the job and keep going, to talk to alumni knowing that they were going to attack you.

Koll: Well, I'm very competitive. I think very highly of the University. So I would not accept defeat. I firmly believed in the University, and felt that the institution was much greater than the problems that we faced, and they would be solved. I didn't know how, obviously. But I still could defend the institution. It was a challenge. I was not intimidated by it.

LaBerge: You mean neither by the students nor by the attacks.

Koll: No, the alumni attacks, no. I know a number of times the protesters came by and we had to lock Alumni House. I did not feel personally threatened. Some of our staff did and we would excuse them, they would go home. Of course when the tear gas dropped, and many times it was in our general area, it was most difficult to continue our usual activities.

LaBerge: Well, maybe next time we'll talk about some more issues that have faced the University, and see how they affected--.

Koll: Be glad to.

More on the Free Speech Movement

[Interview 8: March 5, 1992]##

LaBerge: Last time you were talking about the Free Speech Movement and how the alumni reacted to that. You had told me off tape something about Chancellor Ed Strong and President Clark Kerr, but we hadn't really talked about how you feel it was handled, and what happened to personalities because of that.

Koll: Looking back at the Free Speech Movement, I feel one of the real casualties of it was the University, which I feel suffered substantially from the bad publicity. Alumni are still concerned. Remarkably, when you go out in the field they will still bring up their concerns about the campus not reacting well to the situation and handling it badly.

The individual who suffered most was Ed Strong, who was Chancellor at the time. Clark Kerr was President of the University. Because of the proximity of Clark to the campus, he more or less called the shots. And yet when things didn't go well, Ed wound up being blamed for it. It was a terrible blow. Ed was a very sensitive person and I'm sure, was very dedicated to the University. To be criticized in that manner, and unfairly so, affected his whole life. He just seemed to fade away in the background from then on and disenfranchised himself from the University. He spent a good deal of his time up at Tahoe, where they had a home. To me it was one of the real tragedies and I was very sorry.

I thought Clark Kerr perhaps took unfair advantage of the situation and shifted a good deal of blame that perhaps, since he was calling the shots, should really have been his responsibility. Although looking at it now, people have more or less forgotten Ed Strong's role and traditionally, the alumni blamed Clark Kerr for the handling of it.

On the other hand, I think it should be pointed out that this was the first experience any campus had had dealing with this type of a problem, and there were no precedents or track records to follow. We made a lot of mistakes, I don't think there was any question about it, but it was because we had no experience in dealing with it.

Traditionally, faculty are not, by background and nature, good frontline administrators. They attempt to handle it in a logical, sensible manner and sometimes you can't; it takes a forthright, strong position to deal with the revolutionary people. Most of them are not negotiating--in this particular Free Speech Movement--not negotiating in good faith. It was merely an attempt to cause problems and cause disruption within the University, and I don't think they had any particular goals in mind, but merely to get as much as they could and cause as many problems as they could. It was a rather low period, as far as I'm concerned, in the history of the University. A lot of damage resulted from it.

LaBerge: How did it affect your recruiting students to work at the Lair?

Koll: Interesting enough, I would say one of the bright spots for the University was the Lair staff members. There was still enough interest in the Lair so we were able to select young people who really had more of the traditional values and were good examples of what, I think, alumni like to think the student body at Cal is. We had some very fine people up at the Lair.

We used to hold every week a seminar session, where the students would discuss the issues and alumni would join in. There would be an exchange between the students and the alumni. I thought it was one of the better P.R.s for the University, because once they met the students, and understood where they were coming from and had faith in their judgements, they felt better about the University. It was a very positive factor throughout the summer. The FSM really didn't have a tremendous impact on the quality of the Lair staff.

LaBerge: And there was no loss of participation at the Lair. I mean, you didn't lose numbers of people wanting to come?

Koll: No. They still wanted to come. We always were sold out, with a waiting list. It's been a tradition of the Lair.

LaBerge: Well, going back to Clark Kerr and Ed Strong, how do you see the President's relationship to the Berkeley campus? I mean, because he's President now of the nine campuses, is there a different relationship, do you think?

Koll: There always has been up to this point; the person who was President had a background in the Cal campus. And secondly then, the proximity of the Office of the President to the campus makes them almost a part of the campus. In fact when there were protests, they were involved in them. They have people on the

campus every day. So it has been, I think, both a plus and minus. I know some of the administrators here on the campus wish there was a greater distance separating them from the President's office.

On the other hand, I think it has provided support to the campus that perhaps would not have existed had there been a greater distance. It's going to be interesting when Gardner leaves and the new President is selected. I don't see any candidate who has a background in the Berkeley campus. In fact one of the leading candidates is from the Los Angeles area, UCLA. And if that would happen, it would be interesting to see what impact it would have on the Berkeley campus.

David Gardner and the Alumni Association

LaBerge: Has it changed a little since the Office of the President moved to Oakland?

Koll: It's changed appreciably since the President's Office is in Oakland, and it's given the campus the distance they would like to have had previously. We still, of course, have David Gardner, who is basically a product of this campus; he got his Ph.D. here. But nevertheless, the distance has provided the opportunity for the people here to have more autonomy.

LaBerge: Why don't we talk about David Gardner right now and his introduction to the Alumni Association?

Koll: Yes. David Gardner is, I think, one of the great Presidents of the University, looking at his track record. I've had a longstanding personal relationship with him. It started way back in the late fifties, early sixties, when he went to Echo Camp, a family camp run by Emery Curtice. Emery Curtice was a very close friend of mine and a hunting partner for many years. The first time I met David, he brought him along to go hunting with us. We went up to Knights' Landing, to a rice ranch where we traditionally hunted pheasant. I met Dave and liked him and we established a relationship.

Then David, after he graduated from BYU [Brigham Young University] with his bachelor's degree, came to the Cal campus to get his doctorate degree. He worked for the California Alumni Association and his first job was assistant field director. He was working for me as far as the chart was concerned but actually, we were in a lateral relationship. He was an excellent

staff person and very capable. From there he went on to head up our Alumni Scholarship Program and also started their first annual giving program on the campus.

The Foundation used to be a part of the Alumni Association. They were a subsidiary unit. Dave was then put in charge of getting it started, and he launched the first annual giving program that raised \$40,000, which was considered a lot of money, although in comparison to what's being raised today, it was very insignificant. But he did get it launched.

David Gardner and the Berkeley Foundation

LaBerge: Is this what is now called the Berkeley Foundation?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And before that it had another name, I think. California Alumni Foundation?

Koll: Yes. It was operated under the direction of the California Alumni Association. The staff reported directly to the executive director. Although they had their own board of trustees, it was a part of the association.

LaBerge: And is it still?

Koll: No.

LaBerge: Okay, now it's separate.

Koll: In the early seventies it separated and was made part of the University. And wisely, because they felt they could raise a lot more money when people in the Foundation were speaking directly for the University, employees of the University, rather than for the Alumni Association. It grew well beyond anything that could be handled by the association's structure.

LaBerge: So is it now connected to the Development Office?

Koll: Yes. It is part of the Development Office program, all within the University. The Foundation does have its own board of trustees. When they first raised money in the Foundation, people from the campus came to the Foundation board and requested monies for their different projects, including the Chancellor. Of course the amounts were very insignificant compared to the totals

of today, but nevertheless, it was the origin of the Foundation and the fundraising activities of the campus.

LaBerge: And the purpose of the monies is for any special project?

Koll: It was just what the trustees would decide. But it was University-related. Of course now most of the monies received are of a restrictive nature and designated for special projects on the campus.

David Gardner: Anecdotes

LaBerge: Well, how did Emery Curtice get to know David Gardner?

Koll: Emery had been principal of Berkeley High School, and David went to Berkeley High School. He's born and raised in Berkeley. Emery knew him through their high school association. They still remain very close friends.

An interesting story about David, as I remember back: the Sonora Pass vacationland wanted to do a promotional film. They hired a photographer, motion picture-maker by the name of Johnny Seigel, who I happened to know quite well. He invited me to go on this trip and he asked if I knew anybody who I thought would enjoy it. I suggested David Gardner.

So Dave went along with us, and it was interesting that not only was he a good worker and a wonderful person, but he gained the reputation of being the greatest eater we'd ever observed. He only weighed about 145 to 150 pounds, yet he used to eat more than the 220, 230-pound packers. He'd clean up everything that was ever left at the meals and we got a big kick out of it. He didn't gain any weight.

LaBerge: [laughter] When you said he was the greatest eater, I was thinking of my pictures of him, a very slight person.

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: So what did you do on that trip? You made a movie?

Koll: Yes, we made a movie. It was planned, it was per a prepared script. The moviemaker, John, he would go ahead and set up his cameras, and we would ride through a certain scenic area and he would shoot us. And around the campfire at night, cooking or on

the lakes fishing, he would set up and shoot pictures of our catching fish or cooking at campfires and other activities. The idea was to attract potential tourists to the area, show them what could be enjoyed and how beautiful it was and how much fun it could be during the trips. In fact, I went on three of those trips with John.

LaBerge: So that you're one of the featured persons in these travel ads.

Koll: Yes. And they lost it. We were so sorry because I wanted copies of it. We tried to get them but they had lost the original copies. It was marvelous film, and I had a wonderful time. They liked to have me along because I could handle the horses and I could help with the cooking and setting up camp. And also, I was a fairly good fisherman, so I would get in the fish-action pictures very frequently. They were a marvelous set of films.

LaBerge: Anything else on David Gardner?

Koll: Well, I want to say what a great job he's done with the University. I think his strength has been his ability to work with the governor and the legislature in getting appropriations for the University. I think what impressed the legislature is his honesty, his straightforwardness, and his realistic expectations. If the money isn't there, he doesn't make a lot of press about it. He'll accept the fact that we're getting our fair share. That's all he asks.

I think they have come to trust him and as a result, I think we've received support well beyond what we might have, had we been more aggressive in our demands. He's done an excellent job with the Board of Regents. They are a rather diverse group, and in the past they've been very difficult for the president to deal with. In fact, some of the presidents have not been able to successfully deal with them and they had a short term because of it.

At the first meeting they started to give him a bad time and he said, "Look. You hired me. If you want to keep me, let's work together. If not," he said, "get rid of me, get someone else who you want to work with." And it really shook them up a bit, and from then on he seemed to have established a rapport with them and a very good working relationship.

He's very modest. We've had a social relationship with him ever since we first met him. He's just a wonderful, modest person. Of course it was a great tragedy when his wife Libby died. She had played such a very important role in his life. I

can understand his inability to continue in his role as president because it left a tremendous void in his life and career.

LaBerge: Very impressive to have a man like that say in public his feelings.

Koll: That's right. He has a tremendous commitment to his family and to the Mormon faith. The two of them give him a strength, I think, and a determination in his life well beyond what the average person would have. I look for him to perhaps wind up as head of some foundation. Perhaps be able to spend more time with his family and more time in the Mormon church work. He's taught Sunday school in the church ever since he's been in the area. He said he would not have any appointments on Sunday. I think a few times he made exceptions, but Sunday is for the family and the church. It shows the great commitment that he has in things that he believes.

LaBerge: Did he ever go to the Lair?

Koll: Yes, he's been to the Lair, been to a number of our meetings.

Cal Bears East

LaBerge: Well, let's go back to other issues in the history. Do you have more anecdotes?

Koll: No. I have some other events. I just tried to list them.

LaBerge: That's great, because sitting here, it's hard to just pull them out of nowhere.

Koll: Yes. I gave a little thought to it, and there were a couple that I really-- [paper rustling]

LaBerge: In addition, I didn't realize how much traveling you've done throughout the country. Why don't we go with your anecdotes?

Koll: Yes. Well, one innovation I treasure is the fact that when I was executive director, I was concerned that we had not serviced our out-of-state clubs as well as we should have, and most of them had lost their drive and their ties to the campus. So I set up what I called Cal Bears East. We arranged to have the Chancellor, a faculty member, and the deans of a number of colleges go with us on a trip to the East. We were to have stops at Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York and hold meetings

there. It was usually in the fall and was tied in with a football game.

We were going back to New York and our alumni president, Vicki Braedemann, had established a relationship with the Princeton Club in New York, and arranged to have a meeting at the club. We were to meet with our New York alumni, have a cocktail reception in the afternoon and a dinner meeting in the evening. It just so happened that the Cal Band was going to be there, so I invited them to join us. The Princeton Club was one of the traditional, old, Eastern clubs. Mahoganies and the dark furnishings and very quiet. Everybody sat in a corner and talked in whispering tones. It was so controlled.

Well, when the Cal Band came to join us, they arrived at the entrance and started to play, and it just echoed throughout that whole club. And the club members had the most startled expressions that you've ever seen in your life; they rushed out of the woodwork, wondering what had happened. The Cal Band marched up the steps and into the room and kept playing. It just overpowered the whole club. It was interesting, because once the club members recovered from the shock they started to join us. They came and stood around, enjoyed the music and got very much into the spirit of it. I was surprised, because they invited us back. They're still there talking about the time the Cal Band hit their club. They'd never previously experienced anything like it.

LaBerge: Do you know what year that was?

Koll: That was in--let's see. We were playing Boston College in football that fall. I think it was--let's see, about '85.

LaBerge: Okay. And the alumni president was Vicki?

Koll: No, the club president.

LaBerge: Oh, the club president. Okay. Good.

Koll: Yes, our president, I think, was Bill Milliken. The president of the Alumni Association would accompany us on the trips as well.

Years ago, when I had been in the association a short time, one of my jobs was to take speakers out to different club meetings. I remember taking Clint Evans to visit the Martinez club. When we arrived at the address and we looked--it was a rather odd-looking building. But we went in and I asked people about the building. They said, "Oh, yes. This used to be the mortuary." [laughter] And when they told us where our meeting

was to be held, it was in the holding room, where they held their "clients."

We were getting set up and ready to proceed, and just about the time I was to present Clint Evans to the group, next door to us a band started to play. There was only a very thin partition, and it just roared, and you couldn't hear at all. I was very shocked and I went next door to find out what was happening. There was a group celebrating a wedding reception. I talked to them, I said, "Well, we just can't have this." And he said, "Well, we arranged to have our reception here." So I negotiated with them and they said, "Okay. We'll hold off for about twenty-five minutes, but after that, forget it."

So I went back and introduced Clint Evans. He spoke and sure enough, at the end of twenty-five minutes they had started to play. It was my turn next. I got up--I was very dedicated and ambitious at that time and tried to speak--and after about three minutes I quit. No one could hear me. But it was probably one of the more shocking experiences as a young director that I'd had. But looking at it now, it was a fun experience.

LaBerge: You had to learn how to handle those kinds of things.

Koll: That's part of it. Another experience I had, in the late sixties I was invited by the Stanford executive director Bob Pierce, to attend one of their conferences. During the conference, one of their faculty speakers got up and was telling about the problems that were on the Berkeley campus, in regards to the Free Speech Movement, and how it could never happen at Stanford. They had a totally different arrangement and different relationship with their students. It was so bad that Bob Pierce apologized to me, and their president sent a letter of apology to me.

Well, the day came, about six months later I got a call; the students had invaded the office of the director and he wanted to know how to handle it. They were having the same problems we had. I was, I'm afraid, a little smug about it all.

LaBerge: Similarly, last year when the Chancellor [Chang-Lin Tien] was inaugurated, and [Stanford President] Donald Kennedy came.

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: I mean, I thought that the remarks were very diplomatic. It was really supportive of his problems.

Koll: It was. He was very good. He acknowledged it in a very clever manner at the start. He diffused any negative feeling; in fact, he had the audience with him.

LaBerge: That's right. I think he did.

Koll: Very cleverly done. I wish he had done that well when he was talking about the problems they had with the overcharge. At that event I thought he was just superb in the way he handled it.

LaBerge: Yes, he really was. I'm sure you've been in a lot of situations like that, where you're really sort of walking on eggs.

Big 10 Executive Directors

Koll: Yes. During the sixties and seventies wherever we went out to meetings we faced a very difficult situation. There was such an intense emotional feeling. You had to be very careful how you handled it. And the best way is just to acknowledge the problems up front and then go from there and say, "We're learning and we're doing these things to correct the problem."

I think one of the nicest things that happened to me was in 1988, just as I was about to retire as the executive director of the Alumni Association. We have an organization that would meet once a year, and it includes executive directors from around the country. We met in Madison, Wisconsin. The Royal Viking Cruise Company each year would have a drawing for one of their cruises. A director would win it and of course, they'd be their guest for the trip. They had the drawing and a director by the name of Fred Williams, from Kansas, won it. It was a marvelous trip.

To my surprise, toward the end of the meeting he came up and he presented the cruise to me. He said because of the service that I had rendered to their group, he wanted me to have it. I said, you know, this is too much. I said, "Keep it and wait until the morning and then see" -- we previously had a few drinks. In the morning he came back and said, "No, I want you to have it." So we took that Royal Viking Cruise to Alaska thanks to his generosity, and it was the most impressive display of loyalty and appreciation that I've ever experienced.

LaBerge: Tell me about that group of executive directors. I mean, is it something that you would do more than once a year?

Koll: Once a year, and it's by invitation only. The Big 10 alumni association executive directors started this organization years ago.

LaBerge: The Big 10 meaning Michigan, Ohio State--.

Koll: Yes, the Big 10. Their directors would get together once a year for a three-day summer conference. They would discuss their mutual concerns and problems. They finally decided that they were an inbred group, and they ought to expand their group, invite executive directors from alumni associations who had a similar size alumni body and the same goals and ideas that they had.

They started it by invitation, and the California Alumni Association is recognized as one of the leading alumni associations so we were invited to attend. There would be thirty--the first time--and it built up to about forty-five executive directors from all over the country. It was really the best conference I've ever attended because we would share with total candor, experiences we'd had in our alumni programs.

I always learned a great deal from the other people. Probably not to adopt their ideas in total, but to be able to adopt at least in part what they had done and apply it to our programs. I had a great respect for the people involved; they were all very capable. We built a real friendship among our own groups, and understanding.

The great thing was, once you attended and had a problem, you knew directors all over the country. So you'd pick up the phone and call them. They knew you and would discuss whatever it was and give you ideas. I thought it was extremely helpful. It's continued until just a few years ago when they formalized the organization, and now they have, I think, two meetings a year.

LaBerge: That's very interesting. When I interviewed Arleigh Williams, he had a group like that, too, of deans of students, and it was a really supportive group for him, too.

Koll: We have several groups. All the campuses of the University meet once a year, the executive directors. The Pac-10 now has the same thing. The executive directors from all the Pac-10 schools meet once a year and compare notes. I think those meetings are extremely helpful. In some cases we're probably able to contribute a bit more than we get out of it. Because of the history of our association, the size and the length of time it's been in operation, we have perhaps more experiences than some of

the smaller ones. It's always been a very good and very helpful exchange for everybody.

LaBerge: Well, that Alaska cruise was quite a--.

Koll: It was a marvelous thing, and we enjoyed it. Went up through all the iceberg areas. It was almost like a food orgy, though, because they served six meals a day. It was quite formal. Four or five nights out of the week it was a black tie event. They alerted you in advance to bring your tux along. In fact I prefer more informality with our travel, but nevertheless, we enjoyed it. [laughter]

LaBerge: Let's go back to some of these other issues besides the Free Speech Movement. Now before that--I don't know if you were in the Alumni Association by then--in the forties, but you might remember.

Koll: The Loyalty Oath?

LaBerge: The dormitories.

Koll: No, that was before my time. I came in when the Loyalty Oath was a big issue.

The Loyalty Oath in the Fifties

LaBerge: Okay, let's go to the Loyalty Oath then. That was in the fifties.

Koll: Yes. It was something that really tore the campus apart. The faculty were quite divided on the issues and the Regents were strongly divided. It was hard to work out any type of a compromise between the two.

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LaBerge: Okay, we're on the Loyalty Oath and the University being branded.

Koll: As a hotbed for Communism. So I think a number of people felt it was important that we have a Loyalty Oath to show that we have a loyal group of faculty members. Yet faculty felt there was this great infringement upon their individualities or free choice. They were being branded and singled out unfairly in this area.

It raged very furiously on the campus. Alumni also were quite divided on it. Fortunately, a compromise was worked out and it faded away. But at the time it was a very hot issue.

LaBerge: Now did the Alumni Association have some kind of involvement in it, in helping to resolve it?

Koll: Actually, we took a lot of speakers out and they spoke about it. We were in a difficult position because our alumni were divided on the issue. We couldn't take a stand on either side. Our posture was to get people talking about it, understand the issues and let them make their own decisions. And certainly we couldn't come out in a position contrary to the administration of the campus. I think the fact that we were able to appear as a neutral entity, we were able to accomplish the role of bringing the two sides together and discuss the issues in a rational manner.

LaBerge: Well, two names I have who seem to be involved are Maynard Toll and--.

Koll: Maynard Toll was Alumni Association President at that time, and really one of the more outstanding presidents we've had. He was a great statesman and was an attorney from southern California. He had a great feel for the University and also for the public. I thought he did a superb job in his role as president, assisting with the understanding and negotiation that took place.

LaBerge: So he was from southern California, but he was the president of the Berkeley--.

Koll: Yes. Later on we should talk more about the presidents. There was for a number of years a procedure where the Alumni Association rotated the Alumni Association presidents between the north and south. It's a two-year term, and so for two years you'd have a president selected from the northern California alumni body and then in the following term the president would come from the southern group. We finally gave it up because almost 75 percent of our alumni are in the northern part of the state. The availability of good candidates was substantially greater in the northern part of the state than in the south. The directors felt that we should always have the best possible candidates and not be restricted by geographic location.

LaBerge: Another person I have as active in the Loyalty Oath is Walter Haas, Sr. Do you know anything about--?

Koll: No, I don't know his role. Interesting, David Gardner wrote his thesis on the Loyalty Oath; it was published and one of the

really great works that came out during the whole period. It's being used over and over again by scholars from all over the world. He was very fortunate. Through his personality he was able to get confidential notes and records, things not published previously; it gave a special insight to it. [A.P.] Giannini was one of the Regents at that time, and violently in favor of the Loyalty Oath.

LaBerge: This is Giannini of the Bank of America.

Koll: Yes. We have Giannini Hall here on the Berkeley campus. They were a great family, no question about it, a very powerful family.

LaBerge: Now I'm not sure if it was the fifties or the sixties when the ASUC building was built. Did the Alumni Association have anything to do with that?

Koll: Yes. We helped with the campaign. As far as the student center, you're talking about the ASUC?

LaBerge: Yes.

Koll: The student union. Yes, we helped with the planning and we helped very substantially in their campaign. We made our alumni lists available to them, helped with the promotion in the California Monthly; in general, we were a partner in the building of it. We were delighted to have it located where it is because it brought the student traffic pattern closer to the Alumni House, which is very important.

People's Park in the Seventies

LaBerge: Okay, so the sixties we've covered the Free Speech Movement. How about People's Park in the seventies?

Koll: Now that's been a lingering problem and a very difficult one. As you well know, there were great protests over People's Park. [interruption]

LaBerge: Well, it's sort of an aftermath of the Vietnam War, that was part of it.

Koll: Yes, that was part of it. It became a symbol of protest and student control. The street people all joined together to maintain it as a "People's Park," as they label it. Actually, it

became a very difficult situation. The environment that developed around People's Park has been very negative. About a third of all the crimes in the past that have been charged to the campus actually took place in People's Park. Because it was owned by the University, it was supposedly our responsibility.

There were never adequate funds to police it properly, and every attempt to do something constructively on it met with failure because there would be a great cry to reclaim the park. The student body and others would join forces and make it very difficult. But remarkably so, in the last couple years, the city has joined forces with the campus.

That was one of the problems in the past, that the city had been supporting the protesters. The efforts made by the campus were turned down and the city refused to participate in any of the plans. They really should have shared in the responsibility. The people who occupy the park are actually people from the city, not the campus. They are not students. They are homeless people. The city finally agreed to join with the University and develop it, and it's taking place now. They have the volleyball court and just completed the bathrooms, and they have ground broken for the basketball courts. There's been a great improvement in regards to the atmosphere.

But alumni all over the country have been concerned that the University has not been more active and more aggressive in claiming their property. They felt they should have moved in and should have forced out occupants and used whatever force necessary to control the situation. I think that's a debatable issue. I'm not sure in my own mind what would have been the best procedure. I've been very concerned about the environment that developed, but without support from the city I think it would have been very difficult. It took a unified effort.

That part of Telegraph Avenue has been a disaster area, and I feel very sorry for the business people who live there, because it's been almost impossible to conduct a normal business. People are reluctant to travel through the areas, particularly in the evening. It did not seem to be solvable until recently. To add to it, charitable groups in the area set the park up as a feeding place for the homeless. It's a great way to attract the people to that area. The city didn't oppose it; I think they were delighted that they were coming to People's Park rather than to downtown Berkeley.

Anyhow. It looks like we finally have a solution to a problem that's been very disastrous for the campus and the University. I know when I mention it to alumni, tell them what

the administration is doing in regards to People's Park, I always get a very positive response. It has been a concern.

LaBerge: Well, even with the unified effort there has to be somebody there twenty-four hours a day for a while to make sure things do get built and not torn down.

Koll: This morning I saw two policemen standing by the new toilet buildings. And you're right, they've been there on duty ever since they put the developments in place. If they weren't present, I think there would be an attempt to destroy them. But I think it's on the right track, and I think in a year or two the opposition will diminish and it will not require the present supervision.

Divestment in the Eighties

LaBerge: How about the eighties' issue of divestment?

Koll: That was a red-hot issue, as you can imagine, here on the campus. The University in general was severely criticized for the fact that they had investments in their portfolios of companies who were said to be discriminating in Africa. Lot of protests, lot of meetings. I remember going to a general meeting at the men's gymnasium--the gym could seat about 6,000 people--and it was jammed. Several Regents were there, the President was there. The ASUC president was in charge of the meeting. It had been planned with the administration of the campus.

Pedro Niguera was the person in charge. He had the respect of the protesting students and he had an insight into the responsibilities of the administration and their problems and concerns. I thought he did a superb job in handling the meeting, because it was really tension-packed. There were a number of students who served as monitors in the audience, and would not allow any shouting or booing or hissing. It was really conducted in rather a remarkable manner, where actually the issues were discussed in a logical and factual basis rather than the emotion that had prevailed previously. It gave everybody the chance to blow off a little steam and face up to the issues. And of course, the University did divest very substantially.

LaBerge: What was the alumni reaction? Or wasn't that--?

Koll: The alumni again were divided. But I would say for the most part were supportive of the University, did not feel they should go in and sacrifice financial investments to appease the great concern

about the moral issues involved. Obviously we had some who felt strongly on the other side, but they were in the minority.

LaBerge: Are there other issues like that that I haven't brought up? That were big campus--?

Ethnic Studies and Admission Policy

Koll: The black issue certainly prevailed, "Black is beautiful." I don't know if you remember the days back then.

LaBerge: Yes. And ethnic studies, probably.

Koll: Yes, and the ethnic studies. The relevance. They felt that the University was not relevant to the issues of today, and wanted it to be basically an instrument of change. Yet on the other hand, you had a faculty that felt very strongly that their primary responsibility was more of an educational nature and less carrying the banner for any social changes that were suggested.

There was a greatly divided faculty on the issue. Some faculty members cancelled their classes, others held them for a forum discussion, and this raged rather strongly. I recall there were sessions where all the administrators participated to make them aware of the ethnic issues that were involved, the handling of the ethnic concerns, and our lack of sensitivity to minority feelings. It prevailed for a long time and I think there's still a little of it left, there are still concerns about it.

I think it's cropping up again with the Asian population. When you bring together such a diverse student body as we have, intentionally and I think rightly so, it's unrealistic to expect that everyone is going to live in a harmonious environment, when they have some deep-seated differences within themselves. There's some hostility that exists among the different ethnic groups. You add this all together and you're going to have some problems. It may not always be resolved in a scholarly manner; it may be very emotional and sometimes very abrasive. We're seeing signs of it today. I think it will continue. Again, it's national, not just the campus.

I think one of the big issues that we have faced over the last several years has been admission to the University. There's a great concern among alumni. When you receive, let's say 25,000 applications and you wind up eventually taking 3,500 new freshmen, the competition is extremely keen. You have the

pressures of certain ethnic groups who feel that they should have some special consideration. You have other special groups because of their particular skills maybe getting special attention. You add this all together, and it's an impossible situation.

I know I once heard David Gardner speaking about it, he said, "Look. If anyone has an answer, please come forward and tell me. I don't have the answer." There is no answer. The minute you increase the enrollment for one particular group, you must decrease it for some other group, because you aren't going to increase the total numbers. The campus can't. So it's almost a battle within the groups as to who gets the additional numbers, who loses them. It's a no-win situation. It still continues.

Our admission requirements have become very high. It's a competitive basis. Students who get 4.0s think that they're automatically going to be admitted; they're not. Engineering and some of the majors, you merely get considered with a 4.0. I think two years ago I saw some figures that our total freshman class could have been 4.0s if we had admitted all the 4.0s that applied. So that's not the answer; you need a more diverse population. I am pleased to see the University giving a little more consideration to outside activities, roles of leadership, to essays, all the other things that I think makes up a complete student. I feel the classroom is terribly important, but I think the other dimensions of a student are equally important as far as the University is concerned.

Fraternities and Sororities

Koll: Looking at the Alumni Association and the Development Program now, the Phi Betas [Phi Beta Kappas] are not the ones who are carrying the leadership roles for the University or the Alumni Association, although some of them are doing outstanding jobs. The person who struggled hard to get a "C" has a great loyalty and a great pride in the fact that they achieved at the University. And when they get in a position of success, they are quite willing to share and give something back to the University. They're the people that I find many times are carrying the load.

I want to put in a real plug for the fraternities and sororities. We get more leadership and more financial support from the people who had a fraternal background than any other group. They have a greater loyalty and a greater dedication to the campus, it seems, than any other group of people. And that's

why I hope we continue to work with the fraternities and sororities, particularly in the drinking area. I think they are a very important asset, a very important part of our student community.

LaBerge: So does the Alumni Association do things with them during the year?

Koll: Not as an organization, but many of our alumni leaders serve as advisors to their respective groups. We've kept it at that level. We participate, we have a member from the Alumni Association staff who sits on the interfraternal council. We've had a number of our people--who have been our councillors or directors--that have taken great roles of leadership in their fraternities or sororities. I think it's best for us to conduct our support at that level. I think that the association is very much aware of the need for their perpetuation.

One thing in regards to fraternities that I might add, I mentioned that we had a pheasant-hunting trip at Knight's Landing. We used to hunt on a ranch owned by Fritz Erdmann. He was a Del Rey on the campus a number of years ago. He was only able to complete a couple years on the campus before he had to go to work on his ranch. He used to have all the Del Rey fraternity members up to his ranch for a pheasant-hunting outing, and Emery Curtice, whom I've mentioned, was one of them. I was invited because of Emery. Fritz Erdmann was a very successful rice rancher.

I was there one year and he was telling me about all the money that he'd made, and I talked to him about giving some of it to the University. I knew he had a great loyalty to the fraternal movement. It was during the seventies, when fraternities were really at a low ebb. They were not the popular organization to belong to and they were having a difficult time. I talked him into giving me \$10,000 worth of rice, which I would sell, and set up a fund to recognize fraternity people who made a particularly outstanding contribution either to their own fraternity or fraternal movement.

We invested the money with the Foundation. And the interest from it each year goes to sponsor the Fritz Erdmann Award. Each year we get applications from the different fraternities. We interview the applicants and make awards to them in recognition of their contribution. I've been on the committee from its beginning and it's been interesting to see it continue to perpetuate the fraternal movement, the recognition of it, and the importance of it.



Mike Koll (far right), leading the procession of the classes at Charter Day, 1987.

LaBerge: You know, your mention of having a student who is well rounded, with more than just good grades, isn't that what the alumni scholarship recognizes?

Koll: It's one of the real strengths of it. It was started originally to attract good students, but more importantly, students who demonstrate roles of leadership in their high schools. I think it's very important. It's been continued all through the years and today leadership is one of the important ingredients in receiving an alumni scholarship. You look at the group of people who come to the campus through the scholarship program and track their records here on the campus, they continue to exercise roles of leadership in every area. I think it's been an extremely successful program. In fact I would like to see more scholarships give weight to activities outside of just academic roles.

Charter Day Banquet

LaBerge: Well, I have a list of different programs that the alumni have sponsored. The Charter Day Banquet?

Koll: Yes. It goes way back. You know, we have a Charter Day exercise where we celebrate the granting of the charter to the campus. It was usually a morning exercise. We would bring in all the classes to the Greek Theater and have an outstanding speaker. In the evening we have what we call the Charter Banquet. It was to honor the alumnus of the year.

Prior to the banquet, by a committee of the Alumni Association board, an alumnus would be selected as the Alumnus of the Year. The recipient would be notified, and one of the conditions of receiving the award was to be present at the banquet. The banquet was held in San Francisco; it used to be at the old [Sheraton] Palace and it's been moved. The St. Francis has been the site for the last several years because the numbers have increased. We've had 500 to 1,100 people in attendance at the event, depending on the recipient.

But it's really, I think, one of the very important events of the year for the University. It's a black tie event and it's carried at a high plane. It's a great opportunity for alumni to come and to reassociate with people from the University, and I think it's a pride-builder in itself. I never come away from the banquets without feeling a little better about the University and really good about the fact that I'm part of this wonderful

institution. It's shared by alumni all over the country who come to the event. We've had many outstanding Alumnus of the Year recipients.

Alumnus of the Year and Other Awards

LaBerge: How do you choose the Alumnus of the Year?

Koll: There is a nomination form that goes to all of our alumni clubs, to our officers, past officers of the association, to the administration here on the campus. It's widely circulated. I'm sure that they'll get dozens of nominations each year. There is an Alumnus of the Year Committee. Actually, it's the awards committee, I should say, because it goes beyond the Alumnus of the Year award. They review all these applications and screen them down to, say, probably ten. The committee will get together and discuss each one individually and there will be a ballot vote and someone will be selected. At that point the selectee is contacted by the executive director.

As I mentioned, attendance is a requirement. So you'd call them and say, "You are being considered. Would you accept the nomination if you were to receive it, and would you be able to be present?" And if they can't, they would not get it. I know Gregory Peck was nominated twice. He could not guarantee to be there, so the nominations were withdrawn. The selectee is notified, and we try to do it almost a year in advance so there is time for them to work out their schedules.

LaBerge: So you want to mention specific people who have gotten it whom you thought were significant?

Koll: Well, let's see. [Philip] Habib was one who I thought was very outstanding, his work and as a person as well. [John Kenneth] Galbraith was another one who I enjoyed. In fact I contacted him; it was interesting. I was very impressed because he said, "I don't know what my schedule is, but whatever I have scheduled, I'll cancel it. I'll be there." That kind of response makes you feel real good.

LaBerge: That's right. That's what you're looking for.

Koll: What you're actually looking for. Of course, Wally Haas has received it, as he should. Let's see. I'm trying to think of others, but they don't come to mind particularly, to single out.

LaBerge: Okay. I have another award written down. The Alumni Service Award? Or is that the same?

Koll: No, that's different. The Service Award is people who have rendered, usually over an extended period, an outstanding service to the University and the Alumni Association. And again, you have a nomination process that goes out to all the different clubs and different alumni leaders, the University, asking for nominations for this award. Again, it goes to this awards committee, where they are all reviewed and the selections [are] made. You usually award not more than ten and not fewer than five each year. It's based on, usually, an extended period of service to the University and Alumni Association. It can be either.

LaBerge: What about the Alumni Association's Centennial Medal? Or was that just one time?

Koll: It was just one time. It was given at the time of our centennial celebration of the Alumni Association. Again, people were recognized for their years of distinguished service to the University.

LaBerge: Berkeley Fellows?

Koll: The Berkeley Fellows was started at the time of the University's centennial celebration. Garff Wilson and I were the two people who [had] the responsibility of nominating the first one hundred fellows. I was representing the Alumni Association and the alumni viewpoint and of course, Garff had a broader perspective on the University. And so we came up with the first one hundred people called Berkeley Fellows. It's continued ever since. When people leave it--and it's usually through death--others are brought in. But it's kept primarily at one hundred.

They meet once or twice a year and basically it's a dinner and a speech. It's a celebration of their long, distinguished service to the University. It hasn't been utilized for fund-raising efforts or any other particular cause. I think it's merely a recognition program. There are a lot of very fine people included.

LaBerge: So is there a waiting list of people to be nominated?

Koll: Yes, they have a nominating committee. You can't be actively involved as a staff member in the University. Yes, they have a very good nominating committee, and they have many, many more names than they are able to accommodate.

Tahoe Alumni Center

LaBerge: A couple of things that your wife mentioned. One was the Tahoe Alumni Center. Tell me about that.

Koll: Okay. Well the Lair, as was mentioned earlier, was very, very successful. Everybody thought, "Well, gee. Wouldn't it be great to have a winter operation?" (The Lair just operates during the summer.) We thought about it and thought it was fine, because there was a great interest expressed at the Lair, in skiing and sledding and all the other winter activities. So we were looking around to see what we might do.

The International House Association had attempted to establish a lodge just out of Tahoe City. Their original purpose was to have a place for foreign students to go for a weekend in the winter, and to experience the beauty of the Sierras and get a better feeling of our country and what we have to offer. They started off strictly on volunteer labor and volunteer contributions; they did not have any funding sources. And as many times happens with a project like it, it got off to a great start, but did not have enough funds and interest to continue. The lodge was about two-thirds completed, and it was there without being in use. So we approached the group about taking it over.

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LaBerge: Okay. We just started talking about the Tahoe Alumni Center.

Koll: Alumni Center, yes. So the idea of having a winter program received a great deal of enthusiasm, particularly as it was just in the late 1950s. As you may recall, Squaw Valley in 1960 was the host for the Winter Olympics, and there was great interest. Everybody thought it was marvelous, and we made a survey and it looked like a number of alumni were interested in a winter program. I don't think we did a good job of evaluating the special interest that was built around the Olympics and not a good understanding of the total interest.

The decision was to go ahead. We started off with a modest idea of constructing something for about \$250,000. We would renovate the old lodge that was there, and we'd add on a number of housing units, a dining room, and also a swimming pool and a recreational area. Well when we got the architectural plans-- Bill Corlette was hired as our architect. He's a Class of '41

alumnus who played a very important role in developing the plans for the Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley. [He] came up with a design that he felt was adequate.

The price was about \$650,000 rather than \$250,000. We were really faced with a dilemma, whether to go ahead or not. We finally decided to go ahead, which perhaps wasn't too wise. We went ahead and constructed it, and the association had to borrow money. We also had to work out some agreements with the Granlibakken ski hill that was adjacent to our site. We went ahead and it was constructed. We opened it in the summer of 1960, following the Olympics. It was rather hectic getting everything ready, getting all the approvals and so forth.

We had a modest response to it. As we promoted it and developed it we found that during the peak periods we had far more people than we could accommodate. But unfortunately there were long periods of time in between where there was practically no one there. And our costs continued throughout the year. You had to have a resident staff, involving a lot of expenses. It ran for twelve months of the year; our income was limited to six. The long and short of it, over the years the people that came thoroughly enjoyed it, but economically it was not a good investment. My role was being responsible for the building of it. At that time I knew that I was going to be involved in it for several years, so we purchased a lot and built a little house up there. So we went up and actually lived there for three years.

LaBerge: Full time?

Koll: Full time. We kept our home in Berkeley, but we lived up there. In fact, our youngest daughter started kindergarten there. It was an interesting experience living there during the winter months. We had a lot of snow in those years, and it was in fact a very positive experience. We made some lifelong friends. But getting it going and operating it, it became apparent that it was not going to be a winner. We were losing \$25,000 a year on it, and the association could not afford it.

So then we decided that we probably should sell it, and that's where I had a very active role. It was my responsibility to help sell it, find a buyer. First thing we had to do, we had to negotiate with Granlibakken and the Forest Service. We only had a ten acre-plot and we wanted more land so we would have a viable product to sell. We had to work out a trade with the Forest Service. We bought some property at Boca Dam, which we traded to them for the Granlibakken ski hill. We negotiated with

the operator of the Granlibakken ski hill and bought him out. And so we then had a package to sell.

Thanks to some of our council members who were in real estate, we were able to locate a buyer from New York by the name of Hughes Miller. He was a publisher and loved to ski and wanted to come out to California and set up a ski operation. He had a great idea, but he didn't have much experience. We sold it to him. It was a very good move, because condominiums were coming in, and the hotel-motel type of accommodations we had was on the way out. Although we certainly didn't make any money on the total project, we were able to about break even and get out of it. We got out at the right time. Now I'm just pleased to see how well it's developed and what a wonderful facility it is.

LaBerge: So what is it called now?

Koll: It's Granlibakken. The Granlibakken Ski and Racquet Resort.

LaBerge: I haven't been there, but I've seen ads for it.

Koll: Yes, it's at Granlibakken. We've been very fortunate. The manager, Bill Parson, has been a good friend. He invites us over to a number of events. He is very pleased with the relationship that the facility has with the Alumni Association. It's been a thrill, because it was a great idea and wonderful location, but we simply did not have the resources to develop it. Under Hughes Miller, who purchased it from the Alumni Association, it was not a financial success. He did a wonderful job of developing and expanding it. But he came in during the early seventies, in a recession period, and he was not able to keep the payments up on his loans and he lost it to Chase Manhattan [Bank]. It's been taken over by other groups, and it has turned out to be a great success.

LaBerge: Well, during the time that you were there, you were also running the Lair in the summer?

Koll: Oh, yes. I would commute back and forth. That was rather demanding. Going up over the Sierras, [Route] 395, backside into either Tahoe or the camp. I used to go back and forth every week, spend time at each facility. In the wintertime I also worked out of the Berkeley office. We'd come down--we kept our house--I would come down and spend a couple days in the office in Berkeley working on the field programs and scholarships, other activities.

Bear Treks

LaBerge: The other thing that your wife mentioned was the Bear Treks? I hadn't realized that that was another part of--.

Koll: Yes, alumni tours. I guess it was probably in the middle seventies, I was asked to take over that as one of my responsibilities, the travel program of the Alumni Association.

LaBerge: But it was already established?

Koll: It had been established, yes. But it was rather informally established; we only had a few tours. It started out, three or four or five tours. I guess Dick Erickson should get credit for really launching it, because he loves to travel. He would save up his summer vacation and take a trip or two. He would put them together and take them as his own particular project. In fact when he retired from the University, he's currently working as a tour director with his own tour programs.

LaBerge: Oh, really?

Koll: Yes. It just had a limited number, and we had a person who spent part time on it and then finally full time, a man who did a fair job. I think we expanded from three or four to ten. But then when he left and I looked for someone to take it over, I must say, I made a fortunate choice.

Carolyn Sheaff was hired to take over the travel business. She had no previous experience in traveling, but she had a wonderful organizational ability and an enthusiasm; I felt that her technical skills would develop. She's just been outstanding. She has built the program where they sponsor twenty tours a year. They go to all parts of the world. It's very well done and it's very popular with alumni. People have gone ten, fifteen years in a row now. I think it's a great service, particularly to our older alumni. They can count on the tours being well researched, well administered, and there's a great deal of special services that go along with them.

You always have a host couple along. They have a secondary responsibility; the tour director has the basic role to make certain the facilities are provided, the luggage is taken care of and the hotel rooms and all that. But as a secondary responsibility, the host couple makes certain the individuals are having a good time, or if there is a problem with the tour director, you step in and make certain the problem is resolved. You make certain that everybody is involved. If you have elderly

people, you'll help them with their luggage or whatever is involved.

You always have at the start of your tour a reception, cocktail reception. Its purpose is to bring people together and help promote a unit feeling, a friendship among the group. It's been a great success story. Approximately eight hundred people go every year and it's been a source of income for the association as well as a service benefit to members. We were very fortunate. We were able to serve as a host couple for a number of tours. We've gone to many parts of the world.

LaBerge: What was one of your favorites?

Koll: Africa. Africa is the favorite without question. I guess, because of our backgrounds as outdoors people, and mine particularly--I've been hunting and enjoying the wildlife for many, many years--to go there and to see all the wild animals in their natural habitat, and understand the nature of their existence, to stay in the game lodges right in the middle of the areas where they are. You have the hyena and the lions roaring outside of your tents or cabins or lodges at night. It really was very impressive.

We had a nice group, we had about twenty people on the tour; all were interested basically in the same thing. It was a little rugged at times, but nevertheless, the people who went on the trip expected it. It was a great chance for photography. We all had cameras and took a lot of pictures and enjoyed it immensely. It was my first with a video camera, and I took a couple of films which I've edited down. I still pull them out every once in a while and run them through, just to kind of recapture the scenes. I would go back tomorrow. It was really wonderful. I would never hunt in Africa. It would not be exciting. It's wonderful to take pictures of animals, but hunting--to just ride out and shoot an animal, to me, that's not sportsmanship at all.

LaBerge: So are you still able to do that and be a host couple?

Koll: Let's see. The last one we took was two years ago. They asked us to take one to the Yukon, all the way up to the Arctic. I loved it. We were actually the tour operators, because it was a small group. Once we left Vancouver we were in charge of the trip, total. It was by van. We flew to Whitehorse, but from there on it was by van. We had two vans. We had never been in that area before. We went to Whitehorse and Dawson, the old mining towns, actually did a little gold mining of our own, and all the way up to the Arctic. We flew into an Eskimo village and had a chance to talk to them. We had a guide there who talked to

us. We could see firsthand how the Eskimos lived--learned about the tundra frost and all the hardships they go through and the temperatures. It was a very exciting experience. Along the way at noon we would have a barbecue or picnic. We would bring food, prepare it and serve it to our people. I think everybody thoroughly enjoyed it.

But that was the last one. I question whether we'll have any more. There are a lot of people who want to take these tours, as you might imagine. Traditionally, the officers of the Alumni Association have an opportunity to take one or two tours during their terms. There are a number of people on the waiting list to take a tour. We're very grateful and very appreciative of all the wonderful trips we were able to take. Probably take some a little later as a paying guest.

LaBerge: How does the travel program compare to the Lair in money-making?

Koll: Oh, only a fraction.

LaBerge: I mean the Lair is still the biggest--.

Koll: --outside activity, yes. Well, the Association is grossing probably \$1.2 to \$1.5 million with the Lair, and for the tours you probably gross \$250,000. Of course for each one, expenses come out of it. It's fine. I don't know the actual amount of money they make now on the tours, but it's under \$100,000. You're netting out five, six, seven times that much in the Lair. But as I say, it's an opportunity to provide service for an older group who have served the Alumni Association well and the University. This is sort of a thank you to them, and a great service.

LaBerge: I guess the last Cal Monthly had a pie showing where all the funds came from. The Lair was such a big chunk of it.

Koll: Yes, it is. It's grown so rapidly over the years. Many million dollars have been brought into the association through the Lair programming.

I thought that we mentioned that you were going to get a list of the Alumni Association presidents.

LaBerge: Right. I have a list from 1964 on. I don't have the list before that. But do you want to start with that group?

Koll: Well, yes. Originally I wanted to start with when I came in.

LaBerge: Then why don't we do that next time?

- Koll: Forty-nine, say. I came in in '49, and get the total list and make a few comments.
- LaBerge: Okay. We'll do that next time, then.
- Koll: Yes. I thought of something--I don't know whether you feel it's good. If I just mentioned some of the goals I had as executive director, and some of the accomplishments, and then some of the disappointments I had.
- LaBerge: That would be wonderful. Are you ready to do that now? Or do you want to do that another time?
- Koll: Oh. We probably better do it another time, because we only have four minutes left.

Executive Directors

- LaBerge: How about then, in the next four minutes, do you want to comment on the other executive directors? You've talked about Robert Sibley, Stan McCaffrey. Dick Erickson you just said--.
- Koll: Dick was a very close personal friend of mine for many years. Dick was a great football star here on the campus, quarterback for the Blue and Gold Team, and he was selected to serve as the executive director. I continued to work with him very closely; the Lair was my responsibility. Dick did a good job; he has a great rapport with people, the ability to go out and sell the University. He is very dedicated to the institution, has a great loyalty, great understanding. He was very popular among the alumni. I thought he did a good job of building up the support. Being analytical, I would say he probably wasn't as strong a financial person or administrator, but he more than compensated for any of those weaknesses because of his overall appeal.
- LaBerge: How about Colette Seipel?
- Koll: Well, I must be honest. That was not, in my opinion, a high period in the Alumni Association. Colette Seipel came from the administration, where she was a legal counselor, and she was selected to head up the Alumni Association. Her selection was a bit controversial at the time. She continued to be a very controversial person. I think she divided both the staff and the alumni. She was on the one hand very--well, let me think a minute. Well, why don't we hold it just a minute. I want to

think about that, how I want to word it. I don't want my personal biases, which are extremely strong, to come into play too strongly in this. I think I want to be a little more objective about that. We did not get along well; we had problems all the way through.

LaBerge: She wasn't there very long, either.

Koll: No.

LaBerge: Seventy-three to--. I don't know when she--.

Koll: Well, she was there until about--. Scott came in, I think, in '82. She was there a fair amount of time, yes.

LaBerge: Oh, okay. So a good nine years.

Koll: She appeared to be very liberal on one side, yet underneath she was very conservative. I learned, much to my surprise, she was quite insecure. As a result, she continually needed reassurance about her own ability, her own skills, and her own worth. She was very concerned about any member of the staff who received any recognition--and I was one of them--but the same thing for others as well. She divided the board of directors and there was a strong feeling--particularly the women had strong feelings against her.

But during the period, things went ahead, we were able to compensate. The outside alumni world was not aware of the internal struggles and strife that went on. She finally left. She was going to be involved in the state university system, but she lasted a week there. She had problems with the head person. Then she went to Santa Cruz, where she served as the vice chancellor in charge of development of alumni relations. Since then she's been moving rather regularly from job to job.

LaBerge: Was it an attempt to have a woman as executive director?

Koll: That was part of it. And the president was a lawyer and the president-elect was a lawyer, she was a lawyer, and it was sort of a lawyer support system built in.

LaBerge: Now you know you have a chance to edit this.

Koll: Yes. I may give a little more thought to how exactly I want to word that, because it was a very difficult time. Particularly for me because I was the senior person in the power structure with the Lair, and so I was a constant target. The staff was

very divided; she made a concerted effort to pit one staff member against the others. We had a rather awkward, difficult time.

LaBerge: Well, do you want to comment on Scott Sherman?

Koll: Scott came, was selected because he was supposed to be a strong in administration and business. He'd had an active role in his class and in fact had been in the athletic program here at Cal for a while. He seemed to have great credentials. When he was brought in, number one, he had a very serious health problem immediately, which was most difficult for him. But the second thing was that he was not able to get along with the volunteer board. They were constantly at odds.

I used to talk a lot to Scott, and he still is a very close friend of mine, and try to encourage him; they were trying to help him, they weren't trying to cause problems. But he could never see it that way. He felt that they were undermining him in his administration, and it just didn't work out. And after a couple of years it was decided it was mutually best if Scott would leave and someone else was brought in.

LaBerge: And that's when you came in.

Koll: I came in then, yes.

LaBerge: That's what Claude Hutchison mentioned, that all those years you were there and could have done that job very well, and not until the very end were you brought in.

Koll: Well, I was a contender for Scott's position, I thought. I was not selected. I felt at that point I was in a position where I could have done the job. In fact way back in the Dick Erickson era, I was also a contender at that point. But it was a very difficult decision for me to make when I was passed over: did I wish to stay on? And I gave it a lot of thought. The first reaction was no, I'd leave. But then I started looking around and felt still, I loved the University, I liked what I was doing, and the Lair was such a powerful organization that I really enjoyed being associated with it. And so I would stay on.

In the end it certainly worked out as successfully as I could have possibly hoped, to have the opportunity to head up the association. I was very pleased that our Chancellor, Mike Heyman, in talking to me at the end of my term: he felt that during my term we had accomplished more than all the others put together, which was a wonderful tribute coming from him.

LaBerge: Well, Claude Hutchison said the same. And you were only in that position four years.

Koll: Yes, a little over four years.

LaBerge: So did you have anything to do with choosing Bert Barker after that?

Koll: No. One thing I would not do--I wrote out a job description and then I said the outgoing executive director should not play any role in the selection of a successor. I firmly believe that as a matter of general policy. So I was not invited and I did not volunteer in any manner to play a role in it.

LaBerge: Now do you want to go more into being a contender for the job ahead of time?

Koll: No, I don't think so. We'll leave it. Some things I didn't think were handled well, and I don't want to bring personalities into it. But I would like to review some of my goals and ideas. Some of them I met and some of them I didn't, but what was accomplished I felt was important.

LaBerge: Okay, we'll do that next time, and the presidents.

Koll: Yes.

Bobby Tuck and the Gorilla Suit

[Interview 9: March 12, 1992]##

Koll: In regards to Pat Sullivan Appel, she was on the first staff with Jane. She was one of the original five dining hall girls. They've been coming ever since, and their son, Mark Appel, worked on the staff and served as a manager for a couple of years. So they've been longstanding Lair campers and supporters.

LaBerge: That's another family.

Koll: Yes. We were ending with Bobby Tuck and the gorilla suit, and then we stopped because we didn't have time to include it. I can add a few more stories on that line.

LaBerge: Okay. So let's go with the Bobby Tuck story.

Koll: This happened in the early 1970s, Cal was playing USC [University of Southern California] down in the Coliseum in Los Angeles. We were getting beaten very badly; it was not a very exciting game for the Cal fans. The second half, out of the stands came this gorilla. All of us from the Lair knew immediately who it was, because Bobby Tuck had the gorilla costume up at the camp during the summer. He ran out onto the field and joined the football team in a huddle, and the game came to a screeching halt, as you might imagine. Everybody was so surprised that the security guards were very slow in moving out to the field.

So Bobby ran up and down the field and finally climbed up on the goalpost, waved and taunted them. Then he slid down the pole and raced down the length of the field, up into the stands; the guards were in hot pursuit, trying to catch him, and he raced up into the USC rooting section. Interesting enough, they were so impressed with the performance that they blocked the aisles so that the security guards couldn't get to him, and Bob was able to escape. But it still was a highlight, as far as I'm concerned, of USC-Cal football games in the Coliseum. Only Bob could have pulled it off.

LaBerge: Did he ever admit to it?

Koll: Oh, yes, definitely. He used that uniform a few additional times. He tried it in a bar here, locally. It didn't go very well. [laughter] He wound up in jail. But that was Bob's humor. He's still very active. He was a Yell Leader here at Cal.

The Coca-Cola Bowl in Japan

Koll: Another interesting experience was on an Asian trip. Cal was playing Washington State in the Coca-Cola Bowl a few years back, in Tokyo. The Alumni Association put together a tour group to attend the football game and also to visit some of our other alumni clubs in the areas. Amusing, because when we came to the stadium--the Japanese had been so wonderful and had tried so hard to be the perfect host--when we arrived at the football stadium, they'd gone all out to make sure we had the best seats. Well, in their opinion, the best seats were right in the front row, and so we were sitting down in the front row and we couldn't see anything over the players. But we didn't complain to them, obviously, because they'd made such an effort. During the game it was interesting, they played Cal songs between every time-out. At the end of the game you were so fed up with Cal songs.

LaBerge: This was the Japanese band playing Cal songs?

Koll: No, they had them taped, their loudspeakers roaring out the Cal songs. Our cheerleaders would hold up "Applause" signs, and when they would hold them up, the Japanese would stand on their feet and shout. I'm sure they had no idea what good thing had happened. It was rather an interesting experience.

From there we went to Seoul, Korea for a meeting--we have an alumni group there. When we arrived at the airport we were so overwhelmed. There were about one hundred of our alumni there with a great big banner, "Welcome California Alumni Association." They'd planned a marvelous reception for us, and they had about two hundred of their people present, and we had our group, oh, about seventy-five. It was one of the most beautiful buffets I've ever seen. The Chancellor [Mike Heyman] and several other people--our alumni president--spoke.

I was so impressed because everyone stayed on; there was no one leaving. This went on, and the hour started to get rather late. Finally, the president of the Seoul group motioned he wanted to talk to me, and he very apologetically said, "Would you please ask the Chancellor to step outside? None of us can leave until the guest of honor leaves." So they had all stayed on, waiting for the Chancellor to leave, and he hadn't because he was having a great time. So I talked to Mike Heyman and we stepped outside. When we came back, the place was virtually deserted. [laughter] They'd all been waiting.

LaBerge: You were waiting for them to leave, too, because you didn't quite know that.

Koll: Yes, that's right. It was protocol, and we had no idea that they were bound to stay until the guest of honor had left. In the Pappy Waldorf era--

LaBerge: What years?

The Autographed Football and Other Stories

Koll: I would say in about 1960. Wait a minute, that is incorrect. Because he went to the Rose Bowl in '47, he was there about '57. It would be in the early fifties.

I was going to an alumni gathering in Fresno, and one of the highlights of the evening was to raffle off an autographed football. I was taking one of the assistant coaches with me and we got about halfway to Fresno when we realized we'd forgotten the football; it was on my desk.

We gave thought what to do. Fortunately it was early enough, so we stopped in Merced and went into a sporting goods store and bought a football and got some pens. We sat down and autographed that football. We were writing all different styles in our handwriting, forward and backward and fortunately the coach had a roster with him, so we got all the names. Then as we drove along we held the football out the window so that it would be dry before we got there. We were afraid that it might smear. It was raffled off for \$500.

LaBerge: Oh, you're kidding!

Koll: We always felt guilty about it, but the person, I'm sure, had no idea where the autographs came from.

LaBerge: Was that something common to do, to have a raffle?

Koll: Yes, very frequently. Particularly in those days, when the team was well known, in Pappy's successful years. It was a great fund raiser. It's still done. The Chinese alumni group at Big Game parties each year raffle off a football, and they get several hundred dollars for it. There are people who like to have it for their own keepsake.

One amusing thing I'll tell. Sometimes your strong personal traits will catch up with you, and one of mine is that I always like to be on time and have everything well scheduled. People around me and who travel with me, I expect them to do the same thing. I was traveling on the Cal Bear East trip with President Dick Heggie and his wife Bea. On a couple of occasions they'd been a little late and I had drawn it to their attention. We were in Washington, D.C. and the next morning we were supposed to leave early to go to Chicago.

Suddenly, I was awakened by a phone call, and it was the Heggies, who were down in the lobby, calling me and wanting to know why I wasn't ready to leave. I had left a wake-up call, and either I didn't hear it or whatever--but I was late. I jumped out of bed and I said, "I'll be there!" and in about five minutes I had dressed, packed, and was downstairs. They had called because when they arrived and I wasn't there they knew something was wrong, because I was always there. They checked me out and we rushed out and grabbed a cab. I gave the cab an extra tip and

we just made our plane. But today they still remember that and still remind me of it occasionally.

LaBerge: I'm sure. [laughter] But you know, those kinds of things are good, too, because they knew there was something wrong. If you weren't always on time--.

Koll: I was early. My philosophy is to be a little early.

LaBerge: Did you want to go into the belly dance story, too?

Koll: Oh, I forgot. Yes, that's one of my favorites. During the early fifties the International House was having a special international program, and the Alumni Council at that time was invited to be among the guests. So Stan McCaffrey and a number of other council members and I were there in attendance. One item on the program was an Indian belly dancer who came out and put on a very nice performance. We were quite impressed with it.

Afterwards we heard that the belly dancer was putting on a special performance in the ballroom on the upper deck. So we went up there, and the place was crowded. She had increased the tempo of her performance very appreciatively from the auditorium. As the evening progressed, we were more and more impressed with her abilities. And finally, in a conversation, Stan McCaffrey offered her an alumni scholarship to make certain that she would be able to continue her studies at Cal.

Well, her dance attracted so much attention on the campus that the International House began to explore her background. They found out she was not a student at International House, she was not a student at Cal. In fact, she lived in Brooklyn and had been brought in by some of the students just to add a little more excitement to their program. Needless to say, our offer of an alumni scholarship was withdrawn, and very little attention or mention was made of it thereafter. [laughter]

LaBerge: That's great. Who was the head of International House then? Sheridan Warrick?

Koll: No, it was before him. It was---. I can think of it.

LaBerge: All right. I could also look it up. Well, we just got a flyer in the mail about Alumni Day. Did you have anything to do with instituting that?

Koll: Yes. I was involved in it, for many years was in charge of putting it on. The idea is to put on a diversified program on the campus that would be of interest to a wide variety of alumni.

You line up a number of speakers on different topics and invite the alumni in surrounding areas to come. We usually had around a thousand in attendance. It starts off in the morning with the Chancellor making a welcome address, and then breaking up into sessions followed by a luncheon and continuing in the afternoon. It has been very successful. I think it's a great opportunity for alumni to come back to the campus, to get reassociated with the campus, to again hear outstanding faculty. It's an educational program as well. It has been quite successful; it's been going on for many years now.

LaBerge: People bring their children, too, don't they?

Koll: Yes. It's a great introduction for younger people to come to the University and get some idea of what is available here, and obviously, it's a wonderful recruiting tool.

LaBerge: Okay. More anecdotes? Or do you want to go into presidents?

Koll: Yes, let's go to the presidents.

Alumni Association Presidents, 1949-1990

LaBerge: Well let's see. Who was president when you came on? William M. Hale?

Koll: Hale, yes. First, let me say that overall, the Alumni Association presidents are really an outstanding group. To become president you have about six to eight years of track record as a council member and vice president before you are eligible to become a president. It involves about an eight to ten-year service period.

Starting off, when I first came to work for the Alumni Association in 1949, William Hale was the Alumni Association president. And I didn't get to know him very well; it was only one year, and I was new to the job so I wasn't too involved.

But the next person was Maynard Toll, an attorney from Los Angeles, and really one of the outstanding presidents of all the time that I have been associated with the University. He was a fine gentleman, a great figurehead for the University, had a particularly strong rapport with the staff. He and his family came to the Lair a number of times, and they were just outstanding, the whole family. It was really a thrill to get to

know him, to work with him, and to be part of the association with him.

The next to follow Maynard was John Symes. He was a businessman in San Francisco, and not particularly close to the staff. He did a good job for the association, but he wasn't the outgoing type of personality that many of the presidents were.

He was followed by Ed Harbach, from the Los Angeles area, a businessman. He was again a great Cal fan; he was active in the Cal crew, and did an excellent job in the Los Angeles area representing the University and [was] very supportive of the staff and all of our activities. He in turn also came to the Lair a number of times, and his daughter worked on the Lair staff. I got to know them very well.

He was followed by Cort Majors, who was a great football player from the "Wonder Team" and very well known and loved by everyone. Alumni were very fond of him. He was captain of the "Wonder Team."

LaBerge: Do you know what year that was?

Koll: Yes, 1920.

LaBerge: I've never heard that term, the "Wonder Team."

Koll: Oh. Well, that was the greatest team Cal has ever had. They had just a phenomenal won-loss record, four years undefeated. Andy Smith was their coach, and they still refer to it as perhaps one of the greatest football teams of all time. He [Cort Major] did an excellent job as president of the Alumni Association because he had such a great following. He was just a very thoughtful, wonderful person. I thoroughly enjoyed working with him and was very closely associated with him.

He was followed by Mortimer Smith. He was probably one of the most fun, delightful presidents we've ever had. He was an amateur entertainer as well as being a good business person. Our meetings were always very lively, and he used to do a soft-shoe routine and played the piano and sang. Another president we'll talk about, Norrie Nash, they were sort of a team, and it was really a fun experience to be associated with them. He did a very good job leading the association.

He was followed by James Archer; he was known as Jim. He was a lawyer from San Diego. His great drive and motivation when president was to get a U.C. campus located in their area. He worked very hard on it and obviously was successful, but I think

he spent more time working on getting the campus than he did actually on working for our Alumni Association. He was a good representative on the Board of Regents.

Looking at the presidents¹, you may notice that they were alternating between the southern part of the state and the north. That was discontinued a little later because 70 percent of our alumni live in the northern part of the state, only about 30 percent in the southern. We had far more good candidates available for the presidency in the north.

LaBerge: But if someone from the south wants to be a president, they could be?

Koll: Oh, yes. It's open. Before it was automatic that the presidency switched. Jim Archer was followed by Norrie Nash, and he was a top executive in Kaiser, a very personable individual. As I mentioned, he was a great friend of Mort Smith. He and Mort used to put on acts together, musical numbers.

LaBerge: I'm noticing he was president--maybe it was both Norrie Nash and John Mage who were presidents during the Free Speech Movement?

Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Did they have to get involved in--?

Koll: They were not directly involved. Actually, a little later, when the Free Speech Movement became more of a concern with our alumni--it was a shock at first, the reactions took place later.

Norrie was followed by John Mage, an insurance broker from the Los Angeles area, and a very dedicated Cal person, a very considerate individual. He did a super job and continued after his presidency supporting Cal in the southern California area. He was just starting to get into the Free Speech arena, and he had a difficult time in the Los Angeles area explaining it.

He was followed then by Bill Hudson. Bill was the president of Gerber's Baby Food, and really a "True Blue." Bill had played baseball at Cal, dedicated to the University. I had a particularly close relationship with him because of our baseball interests. We played golf together a number of times. But he was very concerned about the Free Speech [Movement], and being someone who was quite traditional, it was very difficult for him to appreciate what was going on and to accept it.

¹See Appendix for list of California Alumni Association presidents.

LaBerge: We were going to interview him--he was in his nineties--and unfortunately he had an accident and then he died maybe a few months later.

Koll: Yes. I was at his funeral. You know, his wife died less than a month after he died.

LaBerge: Oh, that's too bad. That's not unusual for that to happen, I think.

Koll: No.

LaBerge: She was also a Cal alumna.

Koll: Yes, she was from Cal. Both of them were. I used to go out and pick up Bill and take him to events later on when he couldn't drive. To the Charter Banquet and other events. He was really a wonderful person. We used to go up to their ranch at Booneville. It was a big apple ranch, and [we] would spend weekends with them. It was always a delightful experience. We were close personal friends as well as working within the association.

He was followed by Wendell Witter, one of the members of the great Witter family. Wendell also had to contend with the concerns about the Free Speech [Movement] and the problems on the campus. Wendell was a good figurehead, worked very hard at being president. I think he also had a difficult time accepting the fact that there was a controversial activity taking place on the campus. It was so contrary to his background and the Witter loyalty and dedication.

He was followed by Chris Markey, an attorney from Los Angeles; Chris, I don't think, had a problem with it. He was a little more liberal-oriented. He had a great interest in sports and one of his goals was to have a winning football team at Cal, which he was not able to achieve during his presidency. I know he's spent a lot of time and effort since working on it. He has continued to be involved in the University programming although right now he is serving as an attorney for the University of Southern California.

He was followed by George Link, another attorney, from San Francisco. George had no problem with the student concerns. He had been ASUC president, and probably would have been active in their cause had he been on campus. I've always felt that George was more concerned about advancing his own career by being on the Board of Regents than working for the campus. But he did a good job and has been somewhat active since, not as active as perhaps

we would like. He's now in the southern California area heading up a law firm.

He was followed by Earl Willens, another lawyer, from southern California. Earl was very much interested in social changes. He was supportive of what was taking place on the campus.

Forrest Plant, another attorney, from the Sacramento area, was the next president. He was quite conservative and I thought did a good job in leading the association, but it was at a low-key level.

Jack Rosston was our next president. Jack was a stock and bonds broker in San Francisco. He did a good job as president, but I think the greatest thing about Jack has been his continued support of the University since his presidency. He's been active on many committees, including The Bancroft Library, and also on the trustees for the Foundation, and others. When I was leading the campaign for the scholarship endowment, Jack was my chairman for the committee. He, incidentally, was an alumni scholarship recipient when he came to Cal, so he had a special interest in the program.

He was followed by Shirley Brown Conner, and she was the first woman president and in fact the only woman president to date. Shirley did a very good job. She had an excellent background through the Junior League where she had served as president, and did a superb job of leading the association during her term. I was particularly appreciative of her support during the Seipel period when things weren't going too well, and it was during her term that I was selected to be the executive director.

She was followed by Bill Milliken, who was a true "Old Blue," the old guard. Bill was very traditional in his ideas, he was a good businessperson and ran the association with a firm business hand, but he loved his parties, he loved his fun, which he still does. We had a great many wonderful excursions together.

Bill was followed by Claude Hutchison, Jr., who of all the presidents was certainly my favorite. We were able to work so well together and had the same philosophy about doing things and [he] wanted to see the association become far more active, more involved. It was just a pleasure to work with him and to get his tremendous support. I think because of it, we were able to accomplish quite a few things.

He was followed then by Richard Heggie. Dick had spent a great deal of his time working with the Asian Foundation, and he had a great interest in international alumni events and affairs. He took part in our Asian trip and our Cal Bears East and other activities and did a good job. He continues to be very active in University circles.

LaBerge: When you say Asian Foundation, is that a fund-raising group?

Koll: No, it's a San Francisco-based corporation with international relations as its primary concern. He was actually stationed in Japan for several years as a representative of the Asian Foundation.

LaBerge: Oh, this is his outside-of-the-University job.

Koll: That's right, yes. That was his professional job. He was the executive director for them. That concludes the presidents which I worked with.

LaBerge: Oh, okay. So you haven't worked with Walter Hoadley.

Koll: No. Hoadley was after me.

LaBerge: Well, how much contact did you have with the presidents when you were Lair director? The same amount as later?

Koll: Not as much as the executive director, but most of them came up to the Lair. It was such an important activity that they would come up and visit the Lair and get a chance to see it firsthand. Then through my field program activities I worked with them quite a bit and many times would take them out as speakers to our club events. And certainly at the Charter Banquet. Worked with them very closely with the banquet. So in general I had close contact with all of them over the years.

Role of the President

LaBerge: Would you want to characterize what qualities a good president has?

Koll: Well, I think the first thing, of course, the president must have an understanding of the University and dedication to it. He must be able to represent it and also to understand the things that take place within the institution, be able to respond to the concerns and the needs.

One of the very important functions that they have is to serve on the Board of Regents. They serve during their first year as a Regent-in-waiting--they attend all the meetings but do not have a vote--and the second year they are a voting member. I think their presence and their activities on the Board of Regents is important because it establishes the role of the Alumni Association. If they are strong, good figureheads, I think it gives us the status that is very important to us. They speak for the association, which in reality is speaking for 350,000 alumni. Their voice carried weight, and they would get special attention.

I always felt that the president should be a hands-on manager of the association itself, and be involved and aware of the activities, not making all the primary decisions, but be there to lend support, to lend direction, and perhaps to establish certain standards and goals. It gives the executive director and the whole staff leadership beyond their own group. And it's important to get that support.

LaBerge: I know we've said this before, but the president is a volunteer job.

Koll: It is volunteer, yes. It's very demanding, and it's virtually a full-time job. They must have a business relationship that will accommodate their being away many days and nights. A lot of their energy must be devoted to the presidency. It's helpful, of course, if they have a staff that can assist and handle some of their correspondence. Although most of it is done at the association, it's helpful if some can be done in their own office.

I think it's very important that the association president can get along well with the Chancellor. In some cases it's not been a good relationship and it's hampered the activities of the association on the campus, and the stature of the association. When you have a strong liaison, it elevates the role of the association. I think that's one of the important things we get from the president.

LaBerge: How much contact does the president have with the Chancellor?

Koll: I would say it depends on the individual president. It can be very nominal, merely at Board of Regents' meetings, and we had the Chancellor on our alumni council. Their attendance seems to me to depend quite largely on their personal relationship with the president. When there was a close relationship, they were there and participated actively; when the relationship wasn't that close, they were not present and often did not seem to be

involved. But again, I know a number of presidents would meet regularly with the Chancellor, and particularly at the first part of the year, would ask them, "What do you see as the important role for us to perform for you?"

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LaBerge: If a crisis would come up--.

Koll: The Chancellor would not hesitate a moment to pick up the phone and call the association president and review it with him. Ask the Alumni Association to do certain things for him or with him, get their support and also their viewpoints, because he wanted to be certain he was working within the framework of their support.

LaBerge: Would you have an example of that? Like a time maybe you know a Chancellor called somebody and asked for--?

Koll: I know, but I don't want to tell about it.

LaBerge: Okay. [laughter]

Koll: I think we'll leave that one.

Importance of Volunteer Leadership

LaBerge: All right. Could you comment on the importance of volunteers in the association? Because obviously the association wouldn't go without this group of volunteers.

Koll: The total strength rests in its volunteer body. I think that was one of the reasons I'll mention--one of the goals that I had was to expand the club program, because it represents the grassroots support of our volunteers. From clubs the leadership emerges. It comes up through the ranks and continues to support the association and, more importantly, the University.

Volunteers are it; they're the whole force behind an active and a successful alumni association. How you recruit them, how you identify them, how you train them, how you reward them is essential to a successful program. You must give a lot of thought to it and a lot of preparation. It must be clearly defined what your expectations of them are and what role they can play and how you hope they will participate.

LaBerge: How did you do that? I know from my own volunteer experience, there are some people who can make you feel you are so needed and what you're doing is such a contribution that you would do anything. And there are other people that make you think, "Well gee, I'm just a volunteer. Why are you asking me to do more?" There's a trick to it.

Koll: Yes. I think it's dependent upon how you treat them. I always felt it was important, when I was executive director, to attend the club meetings. It would show the local group that I felt it was important enough to be present. Therefore it was important enough for them to put the time and energy into it. It's very important that you drop them a note afterwards and congratulate them on the success of their event and how important it was, and keep pointing out to them the important role they're playing.

Another thing that we initiated that I thought was very important: every fall we would have a gathering of all of our alumni leaders and bring them back to the campus and recognize their role, give them a chance to understand what was going on within the University, make them feel part of the "in" group. Let them know we appreciate the role that they have to play. You can't do that enough.

Ask yourself, "Why does someone volunteer?" Well, there's a love for the University, but also there has to be some personal satisfaction from it. You want them to do things that are meaningful to them, but also have a real significance. It's not just a social activity, but something that really makes a substantial contribution to the welfare of the institution, to the students, to the faculty, all the things that are important in the institution. It isn't just one thing that you do, but it's a combination. It's an attitude that's equally important, that you continue to express to them, that they know they are appreciated, their work is important.

LaBerge: When I spoke with Claude Hutchison, he said he thought you were very good both at building spirit but also building friendship within all of these groups. It takes a special person to do it.

Koll: It is something that I've always done--I like people. Same way with the fund raising. The first time I call on someone, I don't ask them for money. I call them to get to know them and for them to know me and to establish a personal relationship. From there you move into other things, whether you're asking them to serve on a committee for the association, or asking them to give some financial support to the University. Either case, it's liking

people, and they sense it. People very quickly find out whether you're really interested in them as a person or merely as a way to get something. The response is related to your approach.

Qualities of an Executive Director

LaBerge: I don't know if we already talked about what qualities an executive director has to have. Similar?

Koll: Yes. I think there are many qualities. In fact I wrote a long list of them. They asked me to do this before they interviewed for the new executive director. The bottom line, I said, "Must be able to walk on water." [laughter] Somehow I think you have to be very diversified.

Number one, of course, you must have some leadership qualities. You have to provide an inspiration both to your staff and to alumni. You must be flexible, you must be able to work with volunteer boards. They change dramatically from year to year. I know looking at the presidents that we've had, they all operate differently. The Alumni Council all have different goals and different ideas. You have to be able to roll with the punches. Not necessarily give in all the time, but I think you also have to recognize your role. You should have your say, but recognize that in the final analysis, they have the final say. They are the controlling board. If you disagree with their decision, well you'd better put it aside, and work with them.

It's terribly important how well you work with your own staff, and to build up their importance. I'll talk more about accomplishments. I thought that was one thing I was able to accomplish; it was one of my goals. But you must be able to bring them together in a unit, build within them a pride of their work in the association. You're going to ask special favors of them as far as hourly involvements, energies, and all that sort of thing. If they feel part of the team, and an important cog in the overall success, their response is going to be much greater than if they just feel they're there for a certain hour period.

And again, I think it's important that the executive director has a perspective on the total campus. The Alumni Association is an individual corporation, but it exists in my mind only to serve the University, its main purpose. So anything that affects the University should affect you, you should be involved in it, you should be supportive and helpful in that area. I think that's extremely important.

Finally, the executive director must be a good financial manager, because you're totally self-supported. You must be able to manage your resources and hopefully generate additional sources of income in addition to the traditional methods. Your whole program depends on the resources that you have, so your expansion and your ultimate role is going to depend on how successful you are in keeping your income growing.

Another thing, you must be able to work long hours, and you'd better be dedicated to your work. Because if it's just a job for you, you'll soon wear out and tire; it's got to be something that you really enjoy doing and the extra hours are not a chore, it's just something you want to do.

LaBerge: I would say having a supportive family in that is part of the long hours.

Koll: That's extremely important because there are many, many nights out. Saturdays and Sundays, whatever the occasion may be, there are no particular days or hours. It's whatever is demanded. Yes, that's very important, a supportive family is extremely important. And also, someone who shares some of your goals and affection for the institution, because they're representing the University when they're out with you. Jane has played a very positive role because of her background in the University and her appreciation of the activities; she was very helpful.

Goals and Accomplishments

LaBerge: Well, how about your goals and accomplishments?

Koll: When I became executive director, over the years I had developed some ideas and some goals for myself, and as executive director I was able to work on them and I'll relate what they were and what we were able to accomplish. I thought one very important role was to expand the role of the Alumni Association within the University circles. In the past, I think too often we had been primarily concerned about our own operations and viewed ourselves as an entity separate from the University. I know we've even had Alumni Association presidents who felt the primary purpose of the association was to service membership and secondly, the University. I felt very strongly that it should be reversed, that our primary purpose was to serve the University and be involved in every way that we could. And I think we were able to do a pretty good job.

When I came in, the executive director was on nine University committees; when I left, we were on eighteen. We were on almost every major committee on the campus, and that was because I demonstrated an interest in the overall University activities, took an active role in responding to them. I know one of the special commendations I received from Chancellor Heyman was he thought that I'd done a very good job in making the Alumni Association an integral part of the total University and being actively involved in all the University affairs. I felt good about that.

Committees

LaBerge: What would some of the more important committees be that you were on?

Koll: [looks through papers] I made a list the other day when I was thinking of that.

LaBerge: Oh, okay. I was just wondering in terms of whether it was academic committees--?

Koll: More administrative. [paper rustling] I think one of the most important committees I was on was the Chancellor's Senior Staff. We met every other week, and the Chancellor was always there and all the top officials and vice chancellors and leaders in all departments were there. I was able to take an active role in it. I was encouraged to do so by the Chancellor, and always kept them informed of what the Alumni Association was doing and expressed opinions on things that were going on at the University. I was also always invited to attend their retreats and participate actively.

Another one was a general Public Relations Committee, and that was formed when I was there. We began working on how the University could improve its public relations, and what role each of us could play in it. I was also on the General Publications Committee for the University, and the Honors and Recognition Committee, that was the one that awarded the citations and other events for the campus. I was a representative of the Alumni Association on those.

I started a Student Relations Committee, on which I served as a chairman, and that was to bring the financial aid, the Admissions Office, the Student Services Office, and the Alumni

Association together and coordinate a basis to deal with the problems. Previously, we'd gone in our own direction, and although we were interrelated and always shared in the goals and the problems, we were not talking about them or working on them together.

I was on the Alumni Big C Society: I've been an active member and on the board as past president. And the Bear Backers, the Bear Boosters, and the Sport Recreation Committee.

I served on the Foundation's Trustees, and then we were given a more active role than we previously had. One of the problems, there'd been an adversarial relationship between the Alumni Association and the Foundation, primarily because of personality conflicts. When Curt Simic came on as president of the Foundation, we talked about it. I'd just become executive director, and we felt that we should start working together; we both felt very strongly about it. We started having weekly meetings and talking about the joint efforts that we could make and discuss any concerns that we had. He was invited to all our events, and I was invited to all their events and was given a seat on their trustees and took an active role. We brought the two organizations together very positively, and it strengthened both organizations as well as the University. It was one of the more positive things that we were able to accomplish.

I took an active role--outside of the University--I was on the Pac-10 Alumni Executive Committee and on the University Alumni Executive Committee, and there was an All-University Legislative Committee, I was actually involved in it.

LaBerge: Legislative meaning going up to Sacramento?

Koll: Yes. Well, particularly on the bond issues. We were involved in putting together the bond issues, strategies and the financial support. Those were some of the major committees.

More on Goals and Accomplishments

LaBerge: That gives me a good sense of what you were working on. I kind of stopped you in the middle of goals and accomplishments. [laughter] We were talking about integrating more with the total University and going from nine committees to eighteen.

Koll: Eighteen, yes. I mentioned my goal to expand the field program. Talking to Chancellor Mike Heyman, he felt that was the most

important activity the association could support because he shared my feeling that the grassroots strength of our Alumni Association and the University started at the club level. It is important to get University people out into the field, so representatives of campus on a personal basis could talk to the alumni groups, and give them up-to-date information and make them feel involved. The clubs provided a wonderful format for the gathering. When I came in as executive director, we had forty-five clubs; when I left, we had seventy-five clubs.

Additionally, we expanded our out-of-state programs. Our Cal Bears East program, which I referred to earlier, I initiated. A number of clubs out-of-state had little contact with the campus, so I initiated a program where once a year we brought in the presidents, at our expense, to the campus for a weekend. They had a chance to visit the campus, participate in our board of directors' meetings, and really feel an important part of our overall alumni program. It stimulated their activity and the support we were getting from these clubs.

LaBerge: I'm sure it did.

Koll: Another goal was to strengthen our Alumni Association's financial structure. As I mentioned earlier, we're totally self-supporting financially and we must generate all our own money. Quite a bit of it comes from the endowed membership program. We have about \$7 million in an endowment program, and the interest is used for operational expenses. Also the sale of memberships goes into the operational budget.

But we needed new additional sources in order to grow, because there was only a small amount of growth in the membership areas. I was able to bring in a number of outside programs, including insurance programs, both life and health, sale of a directory, merchandising and other things. As a result, instead of just breaking even or losing money, during the years I was there we always had a surplus that ranged from \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year, and with that we were able to expand our programming. Obviously our purpose--we're nonprofit--was not to accumulate surplus, but it did give us the opportunity to expand programming in the following year.

LaBerge: When you talked about merchandising, do you mean selling T-shirts and sweatshirts?

Koll: No, we sold one or two big items, and it might be in sculpture, it might be a wristwatch--.

LaBerge: Okay. That say "Cal" on it or something?

Koll: Yes, something associated with the University. At one time we tried to sell all the merchandise items, the small items-- sweatshirts, pins, and that sort of thing. The total sales were fairly good, but the costs were so excessive that we made very little net income. By having one item, the company would cover all the expenses and all the work involved, and we would make substantial amounts of money from it. And so we concentrated each year; I tried to come up with one or two special items and offer them to alumni, and it would be a very good supplement to our income.

And in the financial structure I want to give special credit to Kees Van der Zee, who was our controller-manager of the finances and did a superb job. We were able to watch expenses and cut down a number of expenses in the past. The combination of additional income and controlled expenses really put us in a strong financial position. And I mentioned a little earlier, another goal I had was to improve the relationship with the Development Office, but I think I covered that a few minutes ago.

LaBerge: When you were talking about the Foundation?

Koll: Yes. That was, I think, a big step, and it continues today. It has had a tremendous impact on the relationships and the strength of both organizations.

Another important role I had was to improve staff relations. When I came in as executive director the staff was pretty well divided. I mentioned in a previous executive director's term there had been a split in the staff. And I know when I came in there was some question about my being selected; all the people weren't that excited about it. But I worked very hard and met with each member individually and talked to them about their goals and what mine were and how we could work together.

Also I established several committees. One was a staff committee, which I was not to participate in directly. But they were to come up with ideas and suggestions, and one of their members would then forward it to me, without any names on it. Then at our general staff meeting I would respond to them. And it gave them a voice in the total operation and a chance to express any concerns they had.

Another thing I'm sure that was quite important was the fact that because of our financial successes, I was able to substantially increase their salaries and benefits. When I came in there was great concern, and rightly so, that although we were associated with the University, our pay scales and our benefits

were substantially lower. My goal was to bring them up to par, and during the four years I increased salaries by almost 40 percent. It put them on par with the University, and of course that had a favorable impact on the staff members.

LaBerge: It would make the staff feel a part of the University. I mean, they could sort of feel like younger brothers and sisters if they were getting paid less than the rest of the folks they see walking around.

Koll: Yes. And it also made them feel that their efforts were appreciated. We recognized their skills and what they were doing and the hours they were putting in. And in turn, they were being rewarded for it.

We had a number of staff events. I made a special effort, put on a couple barbecues where I would barbecue for the staff or we would have staff retreats and staff activities in general. We'd have a potluck once a month, and recognize birthdays and all the other things that go into improving staff relationships.

At the end of the term I was very happy with the relationships. I guess I've been flattered since, because when I meet with former staffers, you can tell there's a real continuing affection and rapport. Of course, that was a major accomplishment as far as I'm concerned.

LaBerge: Now did most of the staff stay on when you became executive director?

Koll: Most of them did. Very clearly, I had a program; very clearly, I had a style. And I indicated to them what it was, and I hoped they'd like it and work for it, and if they did not, I would certainly help them to relocate where they would be happy. And for most people, they supported it. A couple that did not, but since, we've become very good friends.

LaBerge: Would that be common, for executive directors to come in and change the whole staff? Or not?

Koll: No, not really. It would be uncommon for them to make a dramatic change in staff, but it can happen.

LaBerge: Because I know when there's a new president, a new president brings on a whole new--.

Koll: A whole new staff, yes. It's a little different, I think, because these are professionals in their field, and many have had years of experience. I think most of them are not that tied to

the executive director. Because of changes in the council and in the presidents the whole program often changes so there isn't one pattern that gets so deeply entrenched. It's more flexible.

Another goal was to strengthen and expand the Alumni Scholarship Program. I felt then and still feel it's one of the finest programs that the association offers. It involves a large number of alumni volunteers in the selection of the students and the raising of the money. It's a great way to assist outstanding young people to come to the University. It may not provide all their financial backing, but it's a recognition program that is very important.

When I came in we were giving about 500 awards at \$250 each, and at the end of the term we were giving 800 awards at \$800 each. We had established a goal of 1,000 awards at \$1,000 each, which we didn't reach, but we took a step toward it. At the fiftieth anniversary of the Alumni Scholarship Program, we were able to use the occasion as a drive to establish a \$4 million endowment for alumni scholarships. It has been providing a lot of financial resources for the program.

And obviously I wanted to make certain, one of my goals was that the Lair program be continued, and to maintain the important role it had assumed over the years for the association and the alumni. I think it has been accomplished. Ray Bosch has done a good job as the director for it. The Lair continues to have very successful seasons.

Alumni Association and Intercollegiate Athletics

Koll: One of my major disappointments was in my relationship with the athletic department. Over the years the Alumni Association has not had a very good working relationship with the Athletic Department. I think there was a sense or a feeling that they wanted to be their own entity and be separate and not too involved in the total University operation, including the Alumni Association. When I became executive director I thought I'd make a special effort to work with Dave Maggard, who was the director of intercollegiate athletics at Cal, and it just didn't work out. I think it was probably a conflict of our personalities.

I know one of the problems that concerned me was the Athletic Department blaming the Chancellor and the vice chancellor for some of their failures. They felt they were not getting sufficient support from the administration. Having

worked with both the Chancellor and the vice chancellor very closely, I knew they were very dedicated to athletics, but they had a perspective that athletics was part of the University and not the dominant University function. They had the right priority. They were not the type of people who would be on the sidelines during the games or go to the locker room, it just wasn't their style. I guess they were viewed as not being interested in athletics, and actually, they were quite interested. I felt it most unfair to blame them for some of the lack of successes, and I'm sure the word got back to the director of athletics, and it didn't help our relationship. Despite all the things we did, it did not improve.

I guess I should take some comfort learning that the Foundation had a similar problem. At the same time other departments on the campus also had problems with the Athletic Department. I would like to have been able to bring us together. I felt a lot could be gained by our working together. We shared a lot of interests, and certainly their successes were important to us and our success should have been important to them. That was one of my failures.

LaBerge: Well, you'd also think because you're an athlete yourself and you obviously love athletics, that there would be a natural link.

Koll: I thought so and I'd been active in the Big C Society and support groups.

LaBerge: What about just the general alumni, any person's relationship with intercollegiate athletics? Is there some kind of influence? For instance, when they're picking a football coach or an athletic director?

Koll: It's interesting to observe the general alumni body in regards to athletics. They are very supportive of the University regardless of the lack of winning teams. For many years we have not had great athletic successes in football and basketball.

LaBerge: That's right.

Koll: We just recently conducted the most successful capital campaign that any public institution has ever launched, and that's without a winning football record. The support of the alumni goes much deeper than the athletes' successes.

However, there's a very small but a very vocal and very adamant group of alumni who feel that athletics is very, very important, and should play a much greater role in both the University's program and I also think in the Alumni Association's

involvement. It gets a lot of publicity in the papers, and certainly it has responded very actively to our new Chancellor, who does display a much greater interest, on the field at least, for the sport programs. They're responding to it very strongly.

They would like to play a very active role in the selection of coaches and the management of programs. Years ago they perhaps did. Athletic groups played a more active role in the administration of the athletic programs. But because of the NCAA they've been ruled out of any type of recruiting and as a result, they've had to distance themselves a bit from the athletic department both in management and student financial support. They've not been as dominant an influence as they have been in the past, but many would like to be. But they're a minority; they're actually a very small minority in relationship to the total alumni population.

I think almost every alumnus would like to see a winning team, enjoy the winning season, but [they] recognize that the primary mission of the University is education, and I hope it never changes. I would hate to see us pay the price that some have payed to consistently have a nationally-ranked football team.

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LaBerge: Okay, you were talking about the University keeping its primary mission as education as opposed to athletics.

Koll: I think one of the exciting developments in the educational system has been the emphasis placed on the graduation rates of athletes. Too often in the past, students have come in who have been great athletes, they've been on the campus for their years of eligibility and left without any kind of an educational degree. A few of them have gone into professional sports, but most of them don't. They've really been used.

It's a great psychological adjustment for them, because they've been heroes on the campus, and when they walk out and start competing for jobs, they're competing with people who really have a much better background, better credentials. They don't get the jobs. It's a terrible adjustment to be a hero one day and almost a bum the next.

Now there's a tremendous emphasis on the graduation rate of all athletes. I know here at Cal we have a very effective tutoring program, where athletes are forced to attend study tables, and their grades are monitored. They are moving towards graduation and the graduation rates are substantially increasing.

I think that's happening across the whole nation. I think that's a very positive step.

LaBerge: You were starting to talk about at some univeraities--I think you were going to say that maybe at some universities education isn't the primary goal anymore, it is athletics.

Koll: That is true, there are a number of examples who have been powerful, have had very strong athletic programs, particularly in football, where education, attendance at class is strictly incidental to the performance on the football field. And some of the abuses have been publicized, there have been scandals involved, all kinds of uncomplimentary publicity. It falls on all the schools, unfortunately, and the credibility of many schools are affected by it. I blame the coaches; perhaps we should also blame alumni, because coaches are put in a must-win situation. They will cut corners to achieve winning records and eventually someone has to pay the price for it.

LaBerge: Well, for instance this year, when Cal went to the Citrus Bowl, didn't the Alumni Association sponsor a trip?

Koll: Oh, yes. The Alumni Association sponsored a trip, and it was marvelous. There were almost 7,000 alumni gathered there for the Bowl. A lot of them came from the Bay Area, there was tremendous interest. It was very much an upbeat program. Of course the game was just tremendous; it couldn't have been better. But the rallying and the pride within the alumni was very important.

One of the great things athletics accomplishes is it provides a forum for bringing alumni back to the campus, to reassociate them with the University and with fellow alumni. I think that's one of the most positive things that takes place. It can be utilized in many different ways, for the association, for the Foundation, for many groups.

Women's Athletics

LaBerge: Would you have any comments on women's athletics?

Koll: I think one of the great new developments is the recognition of women's athletics. They have come so far in such a short period. I know looking back, perhaps ten years ago, their budget was around \$700,000 for all women's athletics. Today, it's well over \$3 million, as it should be. There's no reason why, if athletics are important on a campus, for individual's participation and for

the school, why shouldn't it include women? Women have demonstrated that they are very capable in their particular fields, particularly at Cal where they have done exceptionally well. It's brought a lot of people together in support of their programs. It's certainly a great opportunity for students to participate. I just think it's going to continue to grow, and I think it's one of the great improvements in the athletic program.

I am concerned, they're involving themselves in some of the problems that men's athletics have had in the past, including recruiting and athletes' compensations. Several schools have been placed on probation because of infractions in women's sports. I guess it is unrealistic to expect that they would be aware of all the problems that men have had and be able to avoid them. In a competitive environment, the same pressures that men's sports have felt are now being felt among the women, and they're responding to them. I think at Cal it's not true. They've done a very good job here at Cal. But at other schools, as indicated, there are some problems.

Working for the Development Office

LaBerge: Let's see. We've talked about the relationship of the Development Office with the Alumni Association. Now you work for the Development Office, so obviously there's been a good relationship established or you wouldn't have come over from one to the other.

Koll: That's right. This is particularly satisfying, because for a number of years, in Alumni Association organizations across the nation, there was a feeling that the development program was a threat. For years the executive director of the Alumni Association was the kingpin on the campus as far as alumni programming and activities were concerned. When fund raising came along, the Development Office started creeping into those arenas.

At first there was a feeling that we ought to fight it, we ought to take a positive position in opposition to it, and control it. For a number of years I felt that that was an unwise position, because looking ahead, it was obvious that there were going to be financial problems in almost all the institutions. There was a need to raise money. And as we well know, if the Development Office is producing the income for the institution, they're going to gain more support from administration. The Alumni Association does an important job in services and other

programming, but it's going to have to recognize that securing financial resources is going to have a priority on most campuses.

I felt very strongly that we should develop a partnership relationship here on the Berkeley campus. It was the theme song of both Curt Simic and myself, that we were partners. The Alumni Association had a role to play, the Foundation had a role to play, they're both very important to the University. Working together, we could strengthen the total program.

It was well known on the campus that I felt that way. Before I retired as executive director of the Alumni Association, I was invited--in fact Mike Heyman asked me what I was going to do after I retired. I said, "Well, I don't know, maybe I'll go into fund raising." And the next day I got a call [and he said], "If you want to go into fund raising, I know where we'd like you to go." So he and Curt talked and invited me to join the Foundation, and to work with the "Keep the Promise Campaign."

It started out--it's on a yearly basis--both of us assumed it was going to be for a couple years, but it's something that I've enjoyed and they seem very happy with my work, so we'll continue it on a year-to-year basis as long as it is satisfying for both of us.

But it's been a wonderful relationship, and it's given me an opportunity to continue to work with alumni, many of whom I've worked with previously. With a background and a status among alumni, I've been able to do a fairly good job for the Foundation. I have contacts with so many people on a personal basis, I can gain entrance to their office and their time, where perhaps someone who did not have that background would have a more difficult time.

LaBerge: I think so. They picked a jewel. [laughter]

Koll: Well, it's been very pleasant for me; I've enjoyed it. I'm supposed to be here on half time; I put in basically full time because I enjoy the work and enjoy the people. It's something that obviously, after all these years at the University, I have a tremendous love and affection for the institution and anything that I can do to help them I'm just glad to do. I have gained personally so much from the institution, as have my family and friends. It's nice to be out there selling the greatest educational institution perhaps in the world. I feel very proud to be a part of it.

LaBerge: Would that be a good place to end? That was sort of a nice stop.

Koll: Yes, I thought so. [laughter] I was thinking of that as I started.

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GROWING UP AT THE LAIR:
AN INTERVIEW WITH LORETTA KOLL AND LYNNE KOLL MARTIN

An Interview Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1992



Loretta Koll, 1992



Lynne Koll Martin, 1992

Regional Oral History Office
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University of California
Berkeley, California 94720

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name LORETTA ANNETTE KOLL

Date of birth SEPT. 9 1959 Birthplace BERKELEY, CA.

Father's full name MICHAEL JOSEPH KOLL

Occupation RETIRED Birthplace WISCONSIN

Mother's full name JANE VIRGINIA BIEDENBACH KOLL

Occupation COLLEGE PROF. Birthplace BERKELEY, CA.

Your spouse Ø

Occupation _____ Birthplace _____

Your children Ø

Where did you grow up? BERKELEY, CA

Present community BERKELEY CA, Ø MYERS FLAT (HUMBOLDT CO) CA

Education GRADUATED U.C. BERKELEY 1982 BA.

Occupation(s) ARTIST / ARTISAN

Areas of expertise FABRICS

Other interests or activities TRAVEL, DISABILITY RIGHTS,
OUTDOORS/NATURE.

Organizations in which you are active _____

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name LYNNE CAROLYN KOLL MARTIN

Date of birth 4-18-56 Birthplace BERKELEY, CA

Father's full name MICHAEL (ELMO) JOSEPH KOLL-

Occupation RETIRED - UC ALUMNI ^{ASOC.} Birthplace WISCONSIN

Mother's full name JANE VIRGINIA BIEDENBACH KOLL-

Occupation PROFESSOR Birthplace BERKELEY, CA

Your spouse TEVIS PAUL MARTIN III

Occupation LEASING-EQUIPMENT Birthplace SAN FRANCISCO

Your children TEVIS KOLL MARTIN, CALI KOLL MARTIN

Where did you grow up? BERKELEY, CA

Present community SAN FRANCISCO

Education BA. ECONOMICS 1978, UC. BERKELEY

Occupation(s) EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Areas of expertise SENIOR MANAGEMENT RECRUITING,

GENERAL PRACTICE - NO INDUSTRY

SPECIALITY

Other interests or activities BIKING, HIKING, SEWING,

GARDENING, GRAPHOLOGY

Organizations in which you are active SF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

BEAR BACKERS, LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

VI GROWING UP AT THE LAIR: AN INTERVIEW WITH LORETTA KOLL AND
LYNNE KOLL MARTIN

Interview 10: May 13, 1992##

Magic of the Lair

LaBerge: Well, let's start off with what it was like to grow up at the Lair and to be there every summer.

Loretta and Lynne: Magic.

Lynne: Yes, it was. It was a special time as a kid, to grow up at the Lair. I remember vividly camper kids saying, "You're so lucky! You get to stay at camp all summer long." And they were right; they really were right.

LaBerge: Was there a difference between being a camper kid and being a staff kid?

Loretta: Oh, absolutely. As a staff kid, you got to go into the kitchen. [laughter] You got to go into the staff area, although we were given some pretty strict guidelines by our folks about what was acceptable behavior and what was not acceptable behavior. We weren't allowed to go into the staff area unless we were invited by a staffer, and there were some other things along those lines.

Lynne: For example, we could never play bingo.

Loretta: Yes, we never got to play bingo.

LaBerge: Oh, you couldn't play bingo?

Loretta: No, no. My mom's theory was as staff kids we shouldn't win money from the campers. She said, "I can just see it now. 'And for the tenth week, Lynne and Loretta Koll have won the grand bingo

prize.'" It just wasn't going to play very well with the campers.

Lynne: It was the right decision.

Loretta: Yes. So there were some things like that. But also, we could charge things at the store, and we had a charge account at the Kub Korral, and so basically we could just come and go as we pleased, including sitting at the staff table. I remember getting a whole lot of wonderful, wonderful attention from terrific people.

Lynne: We were also camp brats. Keep in mind, when we were very young-- this is not particularly attractive--but we were the boss's daughters and told camper kids, "My daddy owns this camp." That worked a couple times to get kids off swings, but let me assure you, that didn't last long.

Loretta: And you never wanted to get caught. [laughter]

Lynne: I got caught.

LaBerge: Who caught you?

Lynne: Some camper woman who caught me and said, "Little girl, if I only knew who your parents were, I would tell them how poorly behaved you are." [laughter]

Loretta: [in a little girl voice] "Well, I don't know my name--." [laughter]

Lynne: My mom and dad had overheard the woman and didn't claim me for a week.

It was easier as a camp kid to align ourselves with the staff, and that's not to suggest that we didn't get to know the camper kids, but camper friendships were Saturday to Saturday, so it was always easier, in essence, to be part of the staff in some way.

Impact of the Staff

LaBerge: Were there particular staff that were favorites of yours through all those years?

Lynne: Oh, absolutely.

LaBerge: Okay, well why don't we start with you, Lynne?

Lynne: It's hard to name just one, but I think of the Tuck family as a favorite. Who else do you know, Retta?

Loretta: Well, during the year we would have staffers come and stay with us, take care of us when Mom and Dad would go away.

LaBerge: As babysitters.

Loretta: As babysitters. So that was always terrific, because then sometimes other people, who were also on the staff, would come over. I remember we once had Georgeann, I can't remember her last name, but she was dating Bob Tuck at the time, so Bobby came over for a barbecue. It was usually whoever was the teen director. [laughter] I remember having countless painful crushes on all the staff guys. Oh, usually the preteen director was always a big hit. I would definitely second the Tuck family as being especially attentive and also just very special.

Lynne: Giving of themselves.

Loretta: Always had little nicknames for us and made you feel terrific.

Lynne: You have to keep in mind that the staff were heroes; they were role models. For eighteen years we watched different groups of staffers come and go, and so this is what we wanted to be when we grew up. We really sort of knew nothing else, in a way. We were programmed very early on that we were going to Berkeley, and if you went to Berkeley, one of the benefits was to be able to work at the Lair and be a staffer, just like these people.

Loretta: We didn't want to grow up and be like that. We wanted to be like that right then. [laughter] I remember being teased a lot that we were twelve going on thirty-five.

Lynne: Twelve going on eighteen.

Loretta: Yes. You do pick up on an awful lot of things, but if you're going to pick up on anything, you might as well pick it up from the staffers at the Lair.

LaBerge: That's right.

Loretta: Good senses of humor, they knew how to have fun and work hard.

Lynne: The Lair was--at least for me, and I don't know if I can speak for you, Retta--an extended family. My mom is an only child, my dad has three other brothers and sisters, but none of them live

near us. So we really didn't have aunts and uncles and grandparents around. So the Lair really in many respects was an extended family, and these were all our big brothers and sisters, in a way.

Loretta: And certainly when Joyce and Noel Helmbrecht came as the managers at Camp Gold, they were there for a long time. Joyce could do no wrong--

Lynne: Still can't. [laughter]

Loretta: Yes, she was very special to both of us, and included us in a lot of ways. She just hung out with us and did things.

Lynne: I hope my kids have someone like a Joyce Helmbrecht when they grow up. What I mean is that when you can't talk to your parents, you have an adult you can talk to to help guide you through difficult decisions in your life. And certainly Joyce and Noel were there for us.

Loretta: We got a lot of support from people, and a lot of people looked out for you, too.

Lynne: For better, for worse-- . [laughter]

Loretta: Right, exactly.

LaBerge: Well, Noel was the manager, wasn't he? And so Joyce had free time? Sort of like your mother? I mean, sort of had free time, but didn't really? She was really on call, or--?

Lynne: The Lair, it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. You're the supporting spouse, but the supporting spouse does everything from hosting the cocktail parties for the guest speakers to just having an extra ear and eye open for staff, to being available to campers who say, "I want you to know that Head Number Three is broken; I need somebody up there now."

Loretta: The spouse tends to fill in at the dining hall, do all of those extra things, you know, whatever needs to be done. It's definitely a joint effort.

Lynne: It's a full-time job even though it's a vacation location.

LaBerge: Were there hard parts of that for you? I mean, the fact that both your parents really were "on"?

Loretta: Of course, but mostly we were never around.

Lynne: We'd check in at meals.

Loretta: Yes, you would just be set free, and so it wasn't for lack of Mom and Dad, it was, "Oh, God, yes, those are my folks." [laughter]

Transition from Camper to Staffer

Lynne: It was a much harder transition being a staffer. That was really the difficult transition, actually.

LaBerge: Okay, well why don't you tell me about that?

Lynne: Becoming a staffer was for me, in essence, a coming of age. Remember, for eighteen years this is what we'd always hoped to become and suddenly we were. And with that there was great excitement, but there were some drawbacks as well. In part the drawbacks come from a certain amount of everybody thinking, "Aha. This is the boss's daughter. She's on staff. Is she going to squeal on me? Is she going to tell her dad something I did do or didn't do?" And so there's a "Prove it to me" kind of attitude.

I think of my staff years as being incredible highs and real lows. There were some amazing moments that nothing will be able to match, and other moments that I would give anything to do over again if I could. I don't know, Loretta. How about you?

Loretta: I think one thing that I remember, also from when we were really little, was certain rules that we had being in camp. One of them that I don't know if very many people knew about was that we were never to tell our folks anything that we heard about that was going on. If something was going on in camp, if somebody was doing something, they absolutely did not want to hear about it from us. It was almost like that would be the worst thing we could possibly do in camp. That was a real gift.

Lynne: It took us off the hook.

Loretta: It took us off the hook.

Lynne: In theory, if it was really that horrible, they'd hear about it anyway.

Loretta: Right.

Lynne: From somebody else, and it didn't have to be from their daughters.

LaBerge: That was so wise of them to know to do that.

Lynne: I remember Dad saying to me at a final staff party once, where they give awards to the staffers--

LaBerge: This is when you were on staff?

Lynne: Yes. And I will be the first to admit, I've won awards that I've been very proud of, and ones that I wish I could give up in a second. But I remember his comment, "I appreciate the fact that being on staff has been a privilege. I also understand the great sense of responsibility that goes with that, particularly being in the position that you're in." So I think he was cognizant of the fact that there were some real down sides to being a staffer.

LaBerge: So when you were on staff, was he still director of the Lair? Or was he executive director [of the Alumni Association]?

Lynne: He was director of the Lair, so there were two camp managers who reported to him, in essence. No, he was not executive director.

LaBerge: So was he at your camp where you were on staff?

Lynne: Yes.

LaBerge: Same thing for you, too?

Loretta: No, I think they were over at Blue by the time I was in camp. But actually, my experience of being on staff at the Lair was-- Well, I wasn't planning to be a Lair staff member. I was doing it differently. I don't know what my plan was, but I wasn't going to be a Lair staffer. Then a couple of weeks before camp started they called up because somebody had to be at a sorority function back East, and could I fill in for the first couple of weeks? And you know, I thought, "Okay, fine."

I got up there and I absolutely loved it. I didn't want to come home and I just felt awful. Somehow it worked out that the art program had expanded to a point where they needed an extra person or anyway, it got worked out so that I was able to stay. But I would definitely agree with Lynne that it was a whole lot easier and nicer being a camp kid than being the boss's daughter and being on staff.

Lynne: We got nicknamed "KD 1" and "KD 2." What that stands for is, you have to remember that was an era when the first letter of a word

and the last letter of the word were reversed. So for example, that year the Friday night show was Batman and Robin, which was-

Loretta: Nab tab and nibor.

Lynne: Nab tab and nibor. So there was this whole vocabulary of words which included things like breast which was pronounced treab.

Loretta: Words were spelled "sideways."

KD 1 and KD 2

Lynne: Yes, sideways, backward. So we were actually Kimer Daughter number one and Kimer Daughter number two. Kimer being Mike Koll kind of spelled backwards. So we were Mike Koll Daughter 1, Mike Koll Daughter 2. Which at first, I think, was meant to be an "in" joke--a sort of shorthand--and in the end it just sort of became common knowledge and part of the Lair slang.

Loretta: Right.

Lynne: But it was very clear who we were. I remember standing up at one of the staff orientation meetings where you had to introduce yourself. I remember standing up and saying, "My name is Lynne, and I'm in the Gold dining hall." As I was sitting down, it was Noel Helmbrecht who said, "What was your last name again?" [laughter]

Loretta: Right.

Lynne: Thanks, Noel. [laughter]

Loretta: Yes, you try and get away with, "Hi, I'm Loretta!" You know, when you meet new staffers, "Hi, I'm Loretta!" and this and that. Somebody's like, "What's your last name, Loretta? Koll. How do you spell that?"

Lynne: C-o-l-e, right? And the reason why we'd spell it that way is because Terry Cole worked on staff for many years. So we'd always sort of align ourselves with the other Cole family.

Loretta: And there were times when I would want to make sure that I was seen doing, hanging on the rafters, dancing in the rafters at the Teen Lodge at the staff party, because you weren't supposed to do it, and it was being done. I definitely wanted to be up there doing it, you know, so that it wasn't going to be, "Mike Koll's

daughter is down in the corner, twiddling her thumbs." Besides which it was a lot of fun. [laughter] So there were all kinds of ways to--

Lynne: Push the boundaries.

Loretta: Yes, right.

LaBerge: Well, when you ended up being on staff and you hadn't intended to be, were you just a freshman? Or was it before your freshman year?

Loretta: It must have been--yes, I had just finished my freshman year. There were only a couple of times when I remember really getting into trouble up there. And one was being really little and going off to play with a camper friend and not telling my parents. It got late, and I think we might have fallen asleep or something in their tent, and everyone in camp was out looking for me. Boy, did I get into trouble. Another time was being twelve years old and hanging out past midnight in the kitchen with a bunch of staffers, and Mom came in looking for me, and that was awful.

Lynne: It was a good time. [laughter]

Loretta: It was awful, it was awful. But you know, how many years we were up there, and to only have two times when I can think of, "God, that was trouble," or something. So it definitely was magic, to be dirty, and you know, play around, and be able to be outside. Then when you're on staff you sleep--I think I slept outside every night. So then there's always the talk about when you "hit the pavement," which means going back down to the Bay Area.

Lynne: Civilization.

Loretta: Yes. The Lair romances and you know, what happens when the Lair romances "hit the pavement" and all the lingo of the AH and the TL--the alternate honeys and the true loves.

LaBerge: Oh, tell me this.

Loretta: Yes, AH is "alternate honey."

LaBerge: What's an alternate honey?

Lynne: It means you have a girlfriend or a boyfriend down in the Bay Area, and a girlfriend or a boyfriend up at camp. And you pray the two never meet. [laughter]

LaBerge: Or hear about each other?

Lynne: Well, they will.

Loretta: Yes, exactly. Or somebody might say, "Oh, the AH is coming into town." There were all these little code words. It changes over the years with different staff, but you know, who's the Bay Area romance and who's the in-camp romance.

LaBerge: And TL is "true love?"

Lynne: A true love survives the test of the Lair and the pavement.

LaBerge: Were you two on staff at the same time?

Lynne: One year.

LaBerge: At the same camp?

Lynne: We were, but I was at the office over at Blue.

Loretta: That's right.

Lynne: We were both Gold staffers, but I was over--

Loretta: Lynne was a commuter staff.

LaBerge: What was that like? Or maybe there wasn't that much contact?

Loretta: It was cake for me.

Lynne: You know, Loretta and I had been at the Lair together forever. So in a way it was just more the same.

Loretta: Well, it was better for me, though, because it was hard being a teenager and having you, Lynne, being on staff when I wasn't.

Lynne: That's probably true.

Loretta: That was brutal. I couldn't go to staff parties, you know, and I'd be up there with Mom and Dad, and there I was in high school, just feeling like the biggest nerd in the world. [laughter] I wasn't allowed to go to staff parties.

Lynne: And you're probably thinking, "What's the difference between me and Lynne? It's only three years' difference. Why shouldn't I go?"

Loretta: Right.

- LaBerge: That's interesting. Before I came, I thought you'd have lots to say about being a camper and how maybe that was hard and there were drawbacks and stuff. I never thought about being on staff, having difficulties.
- Loretta: No, I would say it was just the opposite.
- Lynne: Being a camper kid was a breeze. I mean, you were a kid.
- LaBerge: That's right. You didn't know any different.
- Lynne: That's right. But staffers had other responsibilities that went with it. It was a more visible position, far more visible.
- Loretta: Much.
- Lynne: Far more visible than just being a staff kid. And visible to campers, too, who would always start off conversations with, "Oh, I remember you when you were a baby. You and your mom lived up in the school and you ate butterflies--." That's how a lot of conversations began. So it was difficult from the standpoint of them letting you grow up, because they always sort of remembered you as little Lynn Koll.
- Loretta: "Let's see. What was your nickname?"
- Lynne: That's right. [laughter] "Thank you." [laughter] Interestingly enough, with some staffers I'm still little Lynn Koll.
- Loretta: I can name people who will always think of me as "Retta." Most of the Tucks.
- Lynne: You are Retta.
- Loretta: Yes.
- Lynne: You're a Retta.

Special Memories

- Loretta: Which is pretty sweet. I think I mentioned one such memory, when you [LaBerge] and Mom and I were just briefly talking. One of the sweetest memories I have, actually, is being at the Lair and learning how to finally tie my shoes.

LaBerge: Let's hear that.

Loretta: I think I was about four, and it was right before lunch, and we were in the little tent by the baseball diamond at Gold. And I can remember absolutely everything about the tent and those multicolored checkered bedspreads that we had.

Lynne: Yes.

Loretta: And the way the light would come in and you could see the tree on the canvas.

Lynne: The tree pattern, the leaf patterns.

Loretta: The leaf pattern. And I remember trying and trying and trying to tie my shoes, and this was a really big deal. They were little red Keds.

Lynne: [laughter] But you don't remember this too clearly.

Loretta: [laughter] No, I don't know anything about this. It's not a big moment for me. And I just remember being in there, you know, trying to get my fingers to do it right and make the loops, and you got the tongue going and the whole thing. And I did it! And I got it. I remember the first bell had rung already, so it was like, "Oh, I gotta do this before lunch." And the second bell rang, and I was higher than a kite, and I went skipping to the dining hall, passing the sump. You know, through the kitchen, you could go in through the kitchen then, and that was a pretty big deal, too. I sat at the staff tables, and I thought I was the greatest thing in the world.

Mike White was on staff then, and I said, "Mike! Guess what?" He said, "What?" I said, "I tied my own shoes!" I remember he picked me up and put me on his lap, and I felt like the queen of the world, you know. He made such a big deal that I'd done it. Everybody was saying, "Oh, Loretta, that's great!" I remember I don't think I ever felt so elated about any achievement in my life as tying my shoes. [laughter] There were lots of good firsts.

LaBerge: Anything like that for you, Lynne?

Lynne: Yes. You're going to laugh. Learning to swim the length of the pool. And the reason why Loretta will laugh is that I don't swim. I mean, I don't like water. Loretta is the water guppy, I'm not. But I remember trying and trying and trying and not making it. Dan Aldridge was the lifeguard. He helped me swim across that pool and I finally made it. It seems all of our

accomplishments happen right before lunch, because I did it in the morning, and I remember going back to the tent, drying off, and when I came to lunch, sitting there--Dan had saved a space for me--and on the tray was fifty cents, to congratulate me for swimming across the pool.

LaBerge: That is so cute! Is this Dan Aldridge, the son of the former Chancellor?

Lynne: Yes.

LaBerge: Do you know where he is now?

Lynne: I have no idea where he is now.

Loretta: Down in southern California somewhere, I think.

Lynne: Yes, I would say Irvine, but I don't know for certain.

Loretta: It was also really exciting to be invited to weddings of staffers. I remember that we got to do that a lot. To be little, you know, and to be invited to weddings and know the people and have it be important and that was really wonderful.

Lynne: Grownup stuff.

Loretta: Yes.

LaBerge: What weddings did you go to?

Loretta: Most of the Tuck weddings and Dan Aldridge's wedding, I remember. That's just what reminded me of it.

Lynne: Some people who got married are divorced right now. [laughter] Some.

Loretta: Some, yes. But I remember Debbie and Jim Terry's wedding. Who else? Cam Corlette. It was again, the extended family. That was definitely part of it.

We don't have to go into the gory details, but I had my first kiss at the Lair. Thirteen years old and up at the Teen Lodge, and it was a really big deal.

Lynne: And what was his name? [laughter]

LaBerge: For all posterity!

Lynne: I think I know who it was!

Loretta: Do you think you know?

Lynne: Yes. Shall I say it?

Loretta: Sure, go ahead.

Lynne: Reed Appel.

Loretta: Yes.

Lynne: I knew it! Reed Appel.

Loretta: The Lair was a good place to receive your first kiss.

Lynne: The Lair is one of the few places that I ever really felt completely safe.

Loretta: Oh, yes.

Lynne: You know, you could be out at midnight and not wondering who's lurking? So therefore a lot of very innocent memories do get created there.

LaBerge: That's exactly why I think it's great for my kids. I mean, they can stay out until midnight, and I don't care. I don't wait up, either. I just go to sleep and know they'll come home sometime.

Lynne: That's right. They're not driving somewhere, they're not getting into a car, hurting themselves.

Bikes, Cats, and Shows

Loretta: The Lair was also--this is an aside. The Lair was the only place we were ever allowed to ride bikes, so we both learned how to ride our bikes at the Lair.

Lynne: That's right. The other memory I have of the Lair are cats, in a sense that we always had a cat with us, and a lot of cats had kittens up there. We had a cat named Mehitabel, who was truly a huntress, and she was black, just pure black. And had a litter of kittens up there, and we gave them all away except for one. It was coming to the end of the summer and we didn't know what to do with this last one, because Mom and Dad absolutely refused to bringing home two cats. Joyce and Noel stepped in, and they took that last cat and they called the cat Mudge.

Loretta: Le Mudge.

Lynne: Le Mudge, which actually is an acronym for Lynne, Loretta, Mike, Jane. That's how it got named.

Loretta: That kitty became the camp kitty.

Lynne: That's right. In fact, [President] Dave Gardner and his family, his wife, Libby, took one of our cats. I remember that. So these were good UC Berkeley cats. [laughter]

LaBerge: Your dad talked about him, but I didn't realize he'd also gone to the Lair.

Loretta: Yes, oh, yes.

Lynne: That's where I first I met Dave Gardner.

Loretta: With his four girls up there. The other thing is, Terry Cole's daughters, Cathy Cole and Lisa Cole, they were up there for a lot of the summers, also. They were really--

Lynne: Sisters.

Loretta: Yes, they were like sisters to us. Every summer we would put on a show for the staff.

LaBerge: Just--?

Loretta: Just the four of us. So the four of us would put on a show, and we would rehearse. Sometimes it was a bike show, we had a bike portion up at the school and we did bike stunts. We would put up show signs in the bathrooms and giggle when we'd run into the boys' bathroom, you know, the guys' head. Staffers would very politely come. [laughter]

Lynne: These shows were God-awful. Bobby Tuck, he has forever endeared himself to me, I remember overhearing him say at a staff meeting, "Now listen. The four girls have put together this show. They have been supportive of us in whatever we do. I expect all of you guys to go and see this show." And damned if all of them didn't come. So Bobby Tuck, you have earned your place in heaven as far as I'm concerned. [laughter] He was a sweetheart.

Loretta: Incredible.

Lynne: They were bad. Goodness, they were awful.

Loretta: They were awful, but we were so proud, and we would practice and because they put on shows, we wanted to put on a show. Actually, I was going through a bunch of pictures, and I have a picture of the four of us when we were doing our bike stunts. [laughter]

Lynne: Mediocre at best.

Loretta: Mediocre at best. But we were excited.

LaBerge: You couldn't ride bikes here because there were no sidewalks?

Loretta: Right. Too dangerous, yes. The Lair was the only place. So that was another sweet thing.

Lynne: Another first.

Loretta: The other thing I was remembering, too, was finding lots of baby birds and trying to nurse them. You know, you'd find the bird and I remember, you'd sleep with it in your electric blanket, and then you'd take it and sit in back of the station wagon where it was warm, and use an eye dropper and try to get these birds to live. I remember finding a baby deer, a little fawn.

Lynne: Yes, it died.

Loretta: It did end up dying, but nursing those. So there was lots of--

Lynne: Flora and fauna expeditions.

Loretta: Yes, right. Picking thousand dollar wildflowers bouquets for Mom out from the meadow. [laughter] [Imitates mother] "Oh, honey, that's lovely, but there's a five hundred dollar fine for every flower you've just picked."

Pack Trips

Loretta: There were lots of pack trips when we were little, with our folks. We packed out of Sardella's station.

Lynne: I remember the death march to Coffin Hollow.

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Lynne: I guess they thought this would be great family fun, and it was an interesting time--

Loretta: All we did was complain. [laughter]

Lynne: That's right. They probably should have just left us.

Loretta: I love the out-of-doors now. I can't get enough of hiking, I can't get enough of--

LaBerge: But it was going with your parents.

Lynne: Yes, that's part of it.

Loretta: At the time it was too much.

Lynne: Yes, it was a death march.

LaBerge: But you went on horses?

Loretta: No.

Lynne: No, we walked. Initially it was a walk.

LaBerge: So what did you do on your parents' days off? Was that part of it?

Lynne: Mom and Dad didn't have days off. They'd just kind of schedule that time away. Dad had two camp managers physically in camp so he didn't have to be there all the time.

Loretta: At that point we started going up less. We didn't move up there for the whole summer; we'd go up for two weeks and then come down for a week and go back up for a couple weeks. So it was a little more sporadic, but I think partly we were up there so much because Mom just loved it so much.

Lynne: Yes.

Loretta: She would just as soon be at the Lair than to be here.

Lynne: So that's where we went.

Jobs on the Staff

LaBerge: Well, when you were on the staff, what different jobs did you have?

Lynne: I'm unimaginative, I'm almost embarrassed to tell you.

LaBerge: That's okay.

Lynne: Dining hall, dining hall, dining hall hostess. [laughter]
Actually, I was hostess for two years and then office manager at Camp Blue.

Loretta: And I was the art director and head of Kub Korral and store person. And then I went back later and was the camp baker and then the head cook.

LaBerge: Can you talk a little bit about being head cook? Because your dad mentioned something about that when I was asking him about the meals. He said, "Well, the meals had changed over the years, and I've got to give a lot of credit to my daughter." And I remember when that happened, and thinking that the menus were much better. I mean, having the salad bar at lunch and so on. How did you do that?

Loretta: Well, I mentioned to you briefly earlier. I had not been hired to be the head cook, but I was up in camp and the man who had hired me to be in--I think I was second or third cook or something that year--and he left three days before camp opened, and so we had no head cook. We were trying to figure out what to do and we were all kind of sitting in the store at the phone, thinking, "What are we going to do?" We were trying to find where this guy went, and it turned out he had driven his truck to Montana. [laughter] So we realized he was not coming back.

So I said, "Well, you know. I don't know how to do it, but I'll sure give it a try." So we scrambled and tried to call all our suppliers, and people were terrific and willing to help us out and tell us, "Well, yes. No produce is ordered." [laughter] And it was like, "Well, we need some."

I guess I had had some background exposure to kind of the food world in Berkeley. I can't make any claims to have taken Berkeley food--gourmet ghetto--to Pinecrest and all, but I just thought the way that the camp food was, was not any way that I would enjoy eating. So I wanted to have more fresh food, more variety, vegetarian alternatives for people, to have coffee and hot drinks and muffins and yogurt out early for people who didn't want to wait around for eggs and sausage and stuff like that. So we started what was called a breakfast bar.

In some ways it was really wonderful. It was very hard work. I didn't have any idea what I was doing, so I didn't do it as well as--you know, I think I stepped on--no I don't mean that to put myself down, but I mean that I wasn't as tactful with

people as I wish I had been. So there was some friction because things were different, people had to work harder than they had before. It was bittersweet in some ways. But certainly the campers loved it, and that was great.

Probably my biggest joy up at the Lair, from any of the times I was on staff, was making the birthday cakes for people. When people would order the cake, I tried to find out what they would like and then if there was some kind of little special theme, and then I would make cookies and decorate the top of the cake. So there were some real wonderful experiences of kids being so excited. I remember the Reuben family, who've been coming up to the Lair forever. The grandmother had her eightieth birthday up there, and so I got to make that cake. Of all the times at the Lair, those are my fondest memories.

Lynne: Loretta is selling herself a little bit short here.

LaBerge: Because the meal plan totally changed.

Lynne: Yes, it did. Loretta is being very modest, but you have to keep in mind that Loretta in many respects is a perfectionist, and she is an artist. So she marries those two, particularly in her cooking. When she talks about cakes, we're not just talking about slapping a few things together and putting on a little icing. We're really in some respects talking about works of art that really touch the imagination and the fancy of whomever receives it. Those are extraordinary kinds of gifts.

Loretta: But it was worth it. The way that the cakes are delivered, you come out and they bang the pans, and the whole dining hall crew and the pot room, the dish crew goes out, and everyone's banging these pots. And then you see the kids, and I would just kind of stand in the back with tears in my eyes, because really, you'd see these children and they would just be like [sharp breath intake!] "Oh! It's the Lair and it's a cake for me! And all of these people are singing!" It was just the greatest thing; it was absolutely my favorite thing.

I think my favorite job that I've ever had in the world was making the cakes at the Lair. Absolutely. I was also lucky, because my birthday is at the very end of the summer, so I used to get to have my birthday at the Lair too. That was neat.

I remember when they had the old lodge in Pinecrest, the old wooden lodge. And there was this little gift shop. I had somehow gone into town with some of the staffers, I don't remember who they are, some of the women staffers. There were these little statues with feather hair, little rock stars. I

thought they were the greatest things in the entire world, and so the staff bought them for me for my birthday. [laughter] I know I still have them somewhere. So that was how we were taken care of, really. I don't remember people ever being mean to us, ever.

Beauty of Sameness

LaBerge: Well, what kind of changes have you seen since you've been there?

Lynne: You know, I was thinking about that. In a funny kind of way, the Lair doesn't change, and that's sort of the beauty of the place. There are very few places where you can continually go year after year and enjoy it for its sameness. When you're "on greet," when the staff greets the campers, the kids are literally exploding out of the car, because they want to make sure they got the same tent. And it's the same volleyball court, and it's the same program, and it's the same director of their program.

Loretta: They feel it's their Lair.

Lynne: It gets very territorial, proprietary.

Loretta: For families, yes.

Lynne: And "our week" and--.

Loretta: Those are important things.

Lynne: So there are traditions. And that goes from being a camper to getting your same tent to your same week with your same group of friends and staffers.

But more to your point, in terms of what changes I've seen. The changes that I'm most cognizant of are the changes that have happened within the context of the mission of the Lair. In my opinion that is to provide an affordable vacation for the entire family. So the changes I've seen have been geared towards how do you respond to the family, and that translates into more programs.

In the beginning there was the Kub Korral and then there were the adult programs. And then in addition to the Kub Korral, there was the preteen, and then the teen program, and then more adult programs. Then they added the sixes and sevens program, and now there is a fours and fives program. There's really

something for everybody; there's just no way you can be bored up there. So that's where I've seen the biggest changes, in terms of the programs. If you physically look at the camp, there are very few changes. There are buildings at Gold that have probably been there since the Boy Scouts who were there over fifty years ago.

Loretta: For example, the doctor shed.

Lynne: The rec hall and the doctor shed, they probably haven't changed.

Loretta: Well, certainly no more wooden deck at the swimming pool. [laughter] Lots of splinters on that. I also just remembered something that you have to be sure to ask Mom--

Lynne: The diving board.

Loretta: --the diving board. The picture of Mom on the diving board.¹

LaBerge: Okay. And she actually has a picture?

Loretta: Oh, yes. There's a very famous picture of Mom--

Lynne: Janie Biedenbach.

Loretta: Janie Biedenbach, yep. And also, I don't know, Mom and Dad were the first Lair couple, too, which was apparently quite the scandal at the time.

LaBerge: I mean, neither of them said it was scandalous, but I could just imagine.

Lynne: Well, people told her it was scandalous.

LaBerge: Oh, did they?

Loretta: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Oh, why don't you tell us about that? [laughter]

Lynne: Dad was the camp manager, Mom was in the dining hall the first year, and in Kub Korral the second year. Somewhere along the line, Dad decided to pursue Mom, and there was a great interest. The moment that it really became apparent that they were going to become a couple--there were staffers who pulled Mom aside and said, "Oh, I can't believe you're getting involved with this man!", in part because he was the camp manager and in part, because of the age difference.

¹See next page.

- Loretta: They used to apparently have staff parties, which weren't in camp. They were, I guess, maybe down at Strawberry? Or something.
- Lynne: I think what you're going to tell is the story about the party that was on the other side of the lake.
- Loretta: Well, anyway, you want to find out how your folks got together and everything. They both get real bashful when we try and talk to them about it. I remember Mom telling me that the first time that she drove home with Dad from a staff party, he leaned over to kiss her and she went out the other door. [laughter] She slammed the door in his face. Is that what you were thinking about?
- Lynne: Yes. At least that's the only story they've told.
- LaBerge: Well, I mean, they both did say, "We met up there and then we were married a year later," but I didn't get anything in between.
- Loretta: I'm trying to think of the changes that I've seen. I think there are a lot of people who want to be real careful that there aren't too many changes. I think that that's important, and that there needs to be that attention. And I think there is some greater sensitivity to having a little bit more ethnic diversity in the staff.
- Lynne: In some respects it's the "same old same old."
- Loretta: Yes.
- Lynne: People who haven't been to the Lair for a long time would go back and probably not see a whole lot of change.

Influences and Privileges

- LaBerge: Are there certain things about the Lair that you think have influenced your life?
- Loretta: I can't think of anything that it hasn't, really.
- Lynne: Yes.

- LaBerge: Or something else, what was it like then to go out in the other world? You know, like find a job? Work with other people that aren't as supportive?
- Loretta: Well, my first job was with Lair people.
- LaBerge: Oh, you mean even outside the Lair.
- Loretta: My first job out of college, I was hired by Doug Cole, who was a C-o-l-e Cole. I think Terry Cole was his uncle, so he was part of it, and he had worked up there and all. Almost everyone in that office was affiliated with the Lair. So there were some pros and cons to that, but Doug was a terrific boss.
- LaBerge: It seems that often the manager--well, not the manager, the program director--it seems that person is always looking for a job.
- Loretta: Yes.
- Lynne: Yes.
- LaBerge: "And I'm looking for a job at the end of August--." And so I wondered how many people do find jobs through camp.
- Lynne: I don't think that many.
- Loretta: Some, certainly.
- Lynne: Yes, and some use the camp, in a way, to do that, to leverage it.
- Loretta: Checking over the roster at "greet" and all that.
- Lynne: [laughter] Yes, and I will not name them, but I can think of several staffers literally looking at the roster and saying, "Oh, he's such-and-such," and, "Oh, he's So-and-so," and target them, to get to know them.

My first job out of college was with a contingency firm. What I really walked away [with] from the Lair was just sort of a richness of imagination that you develop being with that group of people. To suddenly go into the business world that uses more linear thinking than creative thinking was a big shift. I'd go up to the Lair and visit and I'd cry by the time I left, because I was leaving my family to go back to something that wasn't quite as exciting. The Lair is rich in interests and people.

Loretta: Yes, and it's a very select group of people that we were around our whole lives, and they influenced us. You know, people who were very achievement-oriented, people who were incredibly bright.

Lynne: And hard-working.

Loretta: And hard-working, and fun-living, and a great sense of humor.

Lynne: It was "play hard, work hard."

Loretta: Yes.

Lynne: It is a real "play hard, work hard" kind of environment.

Loretta: And real talented and very outgoing. It was shocking. I would say in some ways I just didn't realize how good the Lair was.

Lynne: Well, the biggest adjustment for me was going from living in the staff area with men and women, to suddenly going back to a sorority. There's something quite strange about doing that, and that was always a difficult transition.

The interesting thing is that--how do I explain this?--I'm married, with two small kids, and as a family we have not gone to the Lair yet. I've been really wrestling with why we haven't done so. One reason is that my youngest is one and one-half years old, so--

LaBerge: Well, that's a little young--they're crawling in the dirt.

Lynne: Yes, it's still pretty young. But there's another side of it, too. In part I would have to go back and be a camper. I've been everything else, and campers don't get the same kinds of privileges. I can't quite grasp that I can't go in the kitchen.

There's a part of me that says, is it comfortable for me to go to camp and not work? I've been reassured by ex-staffers that that goes away after the first day. [laughter] But I sort of feel like, yes, I should be setting up a table, or I should be serving a meal, or cleaning up something. I don't know quite how to just enjoy camp at this point. Although, I know my kids would love it. They would love it just as we did.

Loretta: I don't think I'd have the same problem about wanting to be working.

LaBerge: Now, back to the cats, you said that you had cats up there. Now there aren't cats. So what happened with--?

Loretta: I think the managers can have cats.

Lynne: I don't remember a summer without a cat up there.

Loretta: Oh, no.

Lynne: It was part of the summer, drag that cat with you and they yowled all the way through the valley.

Loretta: Right.

Lynne: And caught birds and squirrels and scratched--. I remember early memories, waking up early in the morning to the chipmunks going, "Chee, chee, chee!" because they were always mad at the cats.

Loretta: I think we were very, very privileged, I know we were very privileged to be included in so many functions with our folks, like the cocktail parties where the guest speakers would come. These were people who were from the University, who were Nobel Laureates up there with their families or--

Lynne: Accomplished doctors.

Loretta: Incredibly accomplished doctors, and someone like David Gardner, who you get to meet and sit and talk with and be included as part of a group and have a place there. I'm not used to the fact that other kids didn't get to do that, that they didn't have that kind of exposure. I feel real gifted for having had that. Plus, then after all the adults would go, we would mix the leftover cocktails and make Lisa Cole drink the dregs. [laughter] Lisa would be so sick that she couldn't go to campfire. [laughter] That only happened once.

Mike Koll's Strengths

LaBerge: Would either of you like to comment on your dad's strengths and what he contributed?

Lynne: I think of Dad in two contexts. I think of him as our Dad, and I think of him as Mike Koll, in charge of the Lair. That was particularly important for me when I was on staff to try to divorce the two so I wouldn't get caught in between. When Mike

Koll made a decision that wasn't popular with the staff, I didn't have to try to defend him. He was my dad and I tried to minimize the emotional tug-of-war.

In growing up, we certainly heard our fair share of complaints from staffers who said, "Oh, let me tell you what your dad did." Everybody is entitled to their opinion and that's okay. We certainly learned--not to accept it, but to tolerate it. I tried to come to terms with that. But I'll never forget, several years afterwards, the most critical staffers would come back to us and say, "You know, I didn't like your dad as a staffer, but the one thing I've really come to understand is that he was always fair and that he had the best interest of the Lair at heart." In other words, he wasn't operating under some personal agenda.

So I think what Dad will be remembered for at the Lair is his commitment to developing a family-oriented environment, and trying to do what was best within that context. It's that single-mindedness of purpose that I think is one of his strengths. And yet within that, the ability to change and change his opinion over time. I think that's indicative of him as a person, I think that's a result of being in a university setting, where new ideas are encouraged, permitted, and nurtured.

Loretta: I don't think that--I know that I was never able to divorce the two, the boss and Dad. I got my feelings hurt a lot. I would keep it together and then I would go to my tent and cry because people were saying bad things about my dad. To this day, I feel basically Dad can do no wrong. He has done some things, or people may have some bad opinions which are unfair or unjust. But for the most part, Dad can do no wrong. I have seen him change a great deal; being around us growing up; being around the campus; and with Mom going back to school to get her degree: he was really supportive, accepting, and very proud of her accomplishments.

Lynne: Yes, I think that's very true. He is capable of extraordinary change. Here's a man who grew up in the middle of the Depression in Wisconsin, grew up in an environment where women washed their bloomers, then hung them out to dry in pillowcases "so the menfolk wouldn't get ideas." I mean, I can't even fathom that. He was able to make something of himself. He came from very humble conservative family beginnings.

One of his greatest accomplishments, I think, is creating a program that is bigger than just himself. The Lair has pulled together the energies and the imaginations of a number of people

who have given enormously of themselves. I've got to believe that when you look back on your life and you say, "What did I do?" I think the Lair is a remarkable accomplishment.

Loretta: I think also, Mom often jokes that Dad was born one hundred years too late, that he is really a frontiersman.

Lynne: That he should have opened the West.

Loretta: He should have opened the West. What he did instead though was open the camp. He loves the outdoors; he can't get enough of it. Whenever he takes a vacation, he goes into the back country. He goes outdoors somewhere. So this was a chance for him to really develop something. As Lynne said, there's nothing covert or contrived about Dad. He is straightforward. Whatever the decision, it is from a real clear, purposeful place. Whether you agreed with it or not, or thought it appropriate, it was always honest.

Lynne: It was what he viewed to be the best decision at the time. The decisions weren't always right, but he was willing to make them. In some respects, making a decision is better than making no decision.

Loretta: He was very willing to be wrong, or be the "bad guy." That is not a problem for him.

Lynne: He will admit it.

Loretta: Yes.

Lynne: And the other thing, too, that people may not understand or realize, Dad doesn't hold grudges. You may have crossed him at some point, and if you go back to him at a later date and say, "Mike, I want to talk about whatever--," you talk about it. And then he'll say, "Well, anything else we can talk about?" "Nope. Fine. That's it. We'll never talk about it again unless you want to." He won't hold a grudge, case closed, and he doesn't bring it up again, ever.

Loretta: That's true.

Lynne: When growing up as a kid, when we messed up, we didn't have a parent who threw it back at us, "Remember when you did such-and-such--", he just didn't do that.

Loretta: He's never done that, ever.

Lynne: He's capable of wiping the slate clean, which, I hope I can do with my kids. [laughter] I also remember growing up with him, that, he operated from a basis of trust. Some people believe you have to earn their trust before you get it. Dad sort of operated from the perspective that you had his trust until you proved otherwise.

##

Jane Koll

LaBerge: Let's talk about your mother. I asked about your father first because it's his oral history. But she's also in the oral history and obviously, none of this would have happened without her.

Lynne: Mom gets described as "Everything that Mike Koll isn't." The perception and the reality is that she is very approachable. She was very open, the staff always liked her. I never heard anything mean about Mom.

Loretta: I got proposed to on staff because someone looked at my mother and figured if I grew up to look like her, he should marry me right now. Campers would say, "Your mom, that Janie Koll--"

Lynne: "That Janie Biedenbach--"

Loretta: "--she's so beautiful and she's so sweet." Mom is an incredibly capable woman, and very tactful. She is able to be a support for Dad and be effective in her own right, too. She's very much his partner in loving the outdoors. They went on a pack trip on their honeymoon.

Lynne: Mom tells a funny story. She says, "Well, the first half of the honeymoon we visited all of your father's ex-girlfriends." [laughter] "And the second half of the honeymoon we went on the pack trip, which I thoroughly enjoyed." Loretta, you touched on something; Mom is extraordinarily supportive of Dad without losing sight of who she is, which is a fine line to walk.

Loretta: Of course, Mom just loves the Lair.

Lynne: She loves the Lair. She loves it, and she was happy to be up there. She loved being up there with us. I think it was all incredibly easy and genuine for her to be supportive, because it was her first choice of where to be.

LaBerge: She said to me that it didn't bother her to be so close with everybody all summer. She was able just to keep her privacy even in the midst of all of that. She said when you were real little, they lived right near the staff, and I was thinking, "Oh, well, gee, how do the kids get to sleep and how do they take their naps," and all the problems I would have. "Oh, no problem."

Lynne: Yes, it was just a non-event for her. I think about raising children, and in a way, the Lair is a great baby sitter. It's a safe kind of situation. You get to check in with them, but you're not constantly having to monitor them after a certain age. No, she really loves the Lair.

Tahoe Alumni Center

LaBerge: Do you have any other anecdotes about the Lair? Or about being at Tahoe Alumni Center?

Lynne: You know, there is little comparison with the Tahoe Alumni Center.

Loretta: Actually, what I remember as a highlight of the Tahoe Alumni Center is when Bob Tuck, Sr. would come up and bring those balloons. He used to bring them to the Lair as well. It was nice in that we got to be up at Tahoe. It seemed like we spent our summers at the Lair and our winters at Tahoe.

Lynne: The Tahoe Center was an attempt to try to refine the Lair, but in doing so, it sort of missed the magic and the continuity that comes with the Lair. And it just never seemed to catch on like the Lair. It didn't hold the same kind of spark for us.

Importance of Business Sense

LaBerge: The other thing that I've realized about your dad, and of the Lair in general, what a business it is, and what a good business person he is. I mean, talking about monitoring the expenses and closing the Alumni Center when it wasn't working out. But the Lair has been such a success for the Alumni Association financially, and it sounds like it's because he really was checking everything carefully.

Lynne: Yes. The Lair is certainly one of the greatest sources of revenue for the Alumni Association. I don't think it was started with that in mind, but it has certainly become that. Part of that comes from Dad, in my opinion, and his sense of control. He is also an analytical thinker and he is an anticipator.

I can remember just watching him sit and I said, "What are you doing?" "Well, I'm just thinking through 'what-if' scenarios." It's just how he analyzes a situation and then brings together the resources necessary to formulate a solution. And I'm sure over time, as the Lair began to bring in money, there became increasing pressure to ensure that the expenses were minimized.

Loretta: Dad's really good with money. I mean, he's gone on to the Development Office and has done well. He has a sense about it, when to spend it and when not to spend it.

Lynne: He grew up with none of it, so he appreciates what it is.

Loretta: I cannot imagine having a more generous father, for someone who didn't have money to be willing to share what he has. Yes, and certainly the Lair is a great source of pride for him, too.

Lynne: And vicariously for us.

Loretta: Oh, you bet.

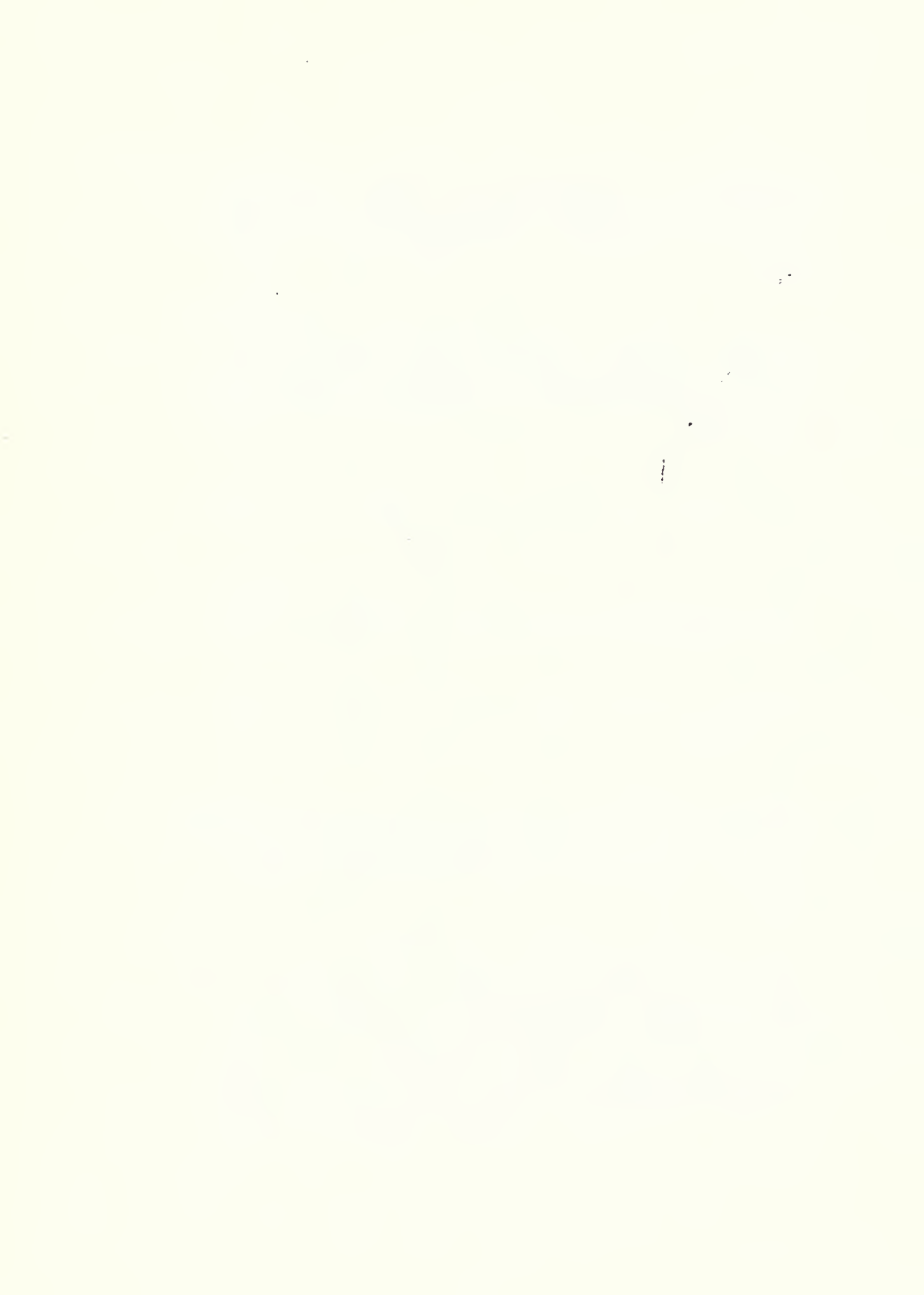
Lynne: It's the coattail effect.

Loretta: Well, you meet people all over, all over the world, that know my dad because of the Lair. I was in Nepal and was talking with some people and said my name. And they turned and looked at me and said, "You're not Mike Koll's daughter, are you?" [laughter] "Yes, I am." "Oh my! We've gone to the Lair for years."

Lynne: I got my second job that way. After reading my resume, Julia Hirsch called me back and asked, "Koll. You wouldn't be Mike Koll's daughter, would you?" I said, "Yes, does that mean I don't get the job?" She knew Dad from her Stanford Alumni Association days.

Loretta: It has been--you know, all in all, a great advantage to be KD 1 and KD 2. [laughter]

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THE FIRST LADY OF THE LAIR: AN INTERVIEW WITH JANE BIEDENBACH KOLL

An Interview Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1992

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name JANE BIEDENBACH KOLL

Date of birth 6/20/25 Birthplace OAKLAND, CA

Father's full name CARL FREDRICK BIEDENBACH

Occupation LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT Birthplace OAKLAND CALIFORNIA
HOME BUILDER

Mother's full name ALICE RISSELL BIEDENBACH

Occupation HOUSE WIFE Birthplace OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

Your spouse MICHAEL JOSEPH KOLL

Occupation EXECUTIVE V.P. Birthplace AMORY WILSONSON
ALUMNI ASSOC. MGMT, DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Your children _____

① LYNNE KOLL, ② KORETTA KOLL

Where did you grow up? BERKELEY / OAKLAND

Present community BERKELEY / OAKLAND

Education B.A. U.C. BERKELEY (1950), M.S. CSU HAYWARD (1957)
Ed.D. NOVA UNIVERSITY (1985)

Occupation(s) FACULTY MEMBER PERALTA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT

Areas of expertise COMMUNITY COLLEGE
EDUCATION AND M.F.C.C. (MARRIAGE, FAMILY
AND CHILD COUNSELOR)

Other interests or activities CAMPING, SKIING, TENNIS, FISHING
SEWING, HIKING, TRAVEL, GRAND CHILDREN, ATHLETIC CLUBS

Organizations in which you are active PRESIDENT COLLEGE OF ALAMEDA SENATE
STATE WIDE FACULTY ORGANIZATIONS, PRYTANEA, SUSTAINING MEMBER
JUNIOR LEAGUE.

VII THE FIRST LADY OF THE LAIR: AN INTERVIEW WITH JANE
BIEDENBACH KOLL

[Interview 7: February 24, 1992]

Family Background and Childhood

Mrs. Koll: Well, let's see. I was born in Berkeley and went all the way through the Berkeley schools. I graduated from Berkeley High School in 1946 and went on to U.C. Berkeley. It was the end of my junior year at U.C. when I wanted to find a place to work that I would enjoy. I had worked the previous summer in the city [San Francisco]. I did not like commuting and I didn't like working in an office. My thought was, "Why don't you take your last summer before you graduate and do something you really would enjoy?" This was why I had applied to the Lair.

LaBerge: Now was there an ad in The Daily Cal? How did you find it?

Mrs. Koll: No, a friend told me about it. This was what brought me in to apply. It sounded like a job I would enjoy - out of doors and with a UC connection. I was an only child, and had mostly been raised by my dad, although my father had married, divorced, and then remarried. My stepmother had died when I was about thirteen.

This [motioning] had always been our home, our family location, however there had always been a good number of people who had lived here with us in this particular facility, a number of whom were students at the University at the time. So in addition to having family members who had gone to the University, I was influenced in the direction of U.C. by the people who had been students and had been sharing our house here with us.

LaBerge: Did you rent out rooms to students?

Mrs. Koll: No, we actually shared the facility. This was accelerated during the war [World War II] because housing was so very, very

difficult to find. We shared the residence. In a sense, this demand for housing is how my dad began to develop this property, because he'd really built all this literally with his own two hands. Whenever he had a little workshop--because he needed a place for his tools and all of his equipment--the demand for housing was so great that people would ask if they couldn't rent out his toolshed. [laughter] He would wind up putting in a small bathroom and a kitchen and he would rent it out. That's the origin of most of these particular rental units. He started building in the 1920s and continued until he died in 1951.

LaBerge: What was your dad's name?

Mrs. Koll: Carl Biedenbach. His father had been principal of Berkeley High School.

LaBerge: Oh, interesting. What was his name?

Mrs. Koll: Charlie.

LaBerge: Did you know your grandfather?

Mrs. Koll: Very, very briefly. He died when I was about eight or nine.

LaBerge: So had your father also grown up in Berkeley?

Mrs. Koll: Yes. He'd gone through the Berkeley schools, and he vowed I would never go to Berkeley High School if Charlie Biedenbach were principal, because he had such a miserable time. Charlie Biedenbach was a very strict disciplinarian. Whenever he would discipline any of the students, when my father was in school at the same time, then the students would come looking for my dad, and then my dad and the students would get into a fight. Then my father would come home and would be punished for getting into a fight with the students. He thought it was a terrible burden for a child to be exposed to. But, as it happened, not only was he no longer principal, he died right before I went there. Berkeley High School was a very pleasant experience for me.

LaBerge: Did you grow up from a little child in this house?

Mrs. Koll: Well, there's some property over at 2646 [Claremont Avenue], and I grew up over there part of the time. And when I was about six or seven years of age, we moved here. This has been home for a long time.

LaBerge: I'm doubly glad your home is still here.

Mrs. Koll: Yes, we were very lucky.

LaBerge: What about your mother? What was your mother's name?

Mrs. Koll: My mother's name, who I never really knew very well, her name was Alice, and she is deceased.

LaBerge: Her maiden name?

Mrs. Koll: Her maiden name was Rissell.

LaBerge: So you were what, six or seven? How old were you when she died?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, no. Actually, she was not well most of her adult life. She was cared for in an intermediary facility, and she lived to be eighty-four years of age. She was disabled, and was not able to maintain or manage a family.

LaBerge: So you went to Berkeley schools, Berkeley High. Any memorable experiences during your schooling?

Mrs. Koll: Well, it was during the war. In retrospect, the kinds of things that I remember were, I would say, the excellent job that the teachers did maintaining some sort of normal semblance of school life at a time when so many of the students were drafted immediately out of their senior year and went off directly into war. Many of them were killed. So, yes. I do remember that.

LaBerge: Any teachers who particularly influenced you?

Mrs. Koll: I would say the general quality of the teachers.

LaBerge: You always thought you would go on to college and to Cal?

Mrs. Koll: There was never a doubt, not in my mind, nor in the mind of my father. He had four sisters, and this was just a given as it had been for his sisters. He was the only one of the five children who did not finish college, and he was--really, had he been more disciplined, he would have been an architect. He was very much of a landscape architect. But it was just the kind of thing that was expected, you did not stop at high school, you just simply kept going for a college degree. This was not open for discussion. It was just something you did.

LaBerge: So what did you major in?

Mrs. Koll: Speech and English, and I minored in P.E.

LaBerge: So you were sort of a natural for the job at the Lair.

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes, yes. Right. [laughter]

Interview with Mike Koll

LaBerge: Well, why don't we go into that, and tell me about your interview with Mike.

Mrs. Koll: It was where the old Eshleman [Hall] used to be, and Stan McCaffrey was the executive director [of the Alumni Association] at the time. I remember that Mike's office was up this long stairway. He was interviewing people for the Lair and I put in an application.

LaBerge: You just handed it to him?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, I talked with him for a while, oh, yes. We talked for a while.

LaBerge: And what did you think the job was going to be like?

Mrs. Koll: Well, I was going to work in the dining hall, and I had worked in other camping situations before, so I had some idea of the setting. I thought it would be pretty much as it turned out to be.

LaBerge: Did some of your friends go up there, too?

Mrs. Koll: No. I went up on my own; this was something I wanted to do. So I simply applied, went up and did the job. I just knew I didn't want to go work in the city again.

LaBerge: What had you done in the city?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, I had a job filing. At the end of the summer I couldn't remember the alphabet, I couldn't--I mean, it was awful.

LaBerge: Well, you'll love to hear Mike's rendition of meeting you.

Mrs. Koll: Oh, okay. [laughter]

LaBerge: It's very cute, it's very touching. I guess before you give me your impressions of the Lair, why don't you tell me about how

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you two got together. Because he was really your boss. Did you have any idea during the summer that--?

Mrs. Koll: That he was interested in me? Yes. Well, at the time I all of a sudden realized he was interested, I thought, "Oh, for heaven's sake!" And then the more I thought about it, I thought, "This has real possibilities." [laughter] So it wasn't the kind of situation where I thought, "Oh, this is going to be a neat thing." I realized the kinds of environments I liked, and I certainly liked a lot of qualities about him. And so the more I had a chance to be in the environment of the Lair and get some sense of what it was all about, the more comfortable I felt about it, the more I felt, "This is going to work."

LaBerge: So you were probably the first Lair romance.

Mrs. Koll: Yes. Yes, right. Well, Cab and Gary Rogers, Bob and Marge Albo.

LaBerge: And Ann and Dave Flinn.

Mrs. Koll: Ann and Dave, absolutely.

First Summer at the Lair

LaBerge: Tell me a little bit about the Lair that first summer. Either problems you encountered or special programs--?

Mrs. Koll: I think the number one improvement that was made after that first summer was they were able to go to flush toilets from chemical toilets. That probably ensured the future of the Lair. We used to fill the swimming pool right out of the creek, and it was so cold you couldn't swim in it at the beginning. And then by the time it warmed up, you couldn't see the bottom; it got a little fuzzy and furry. [laughter]

The dining hall was situated in such a way so that you had this long ramp. Not too long, but it was steep and pitched a bit. And every now and then, if you didn't balance the food on the tray just right, whole carts would go off to the side. The maximum number of campers they had the first few weeks was probably about 125. Those of us who worked in the dining hall, we would sit down and eat with the campers, and we would just jump up and run back and forth and get food as it was needed.

Oh, what else can I remember about that? I remember some of the personnel up there. Jimmy Cullom. Jimmy was back from the service and the staff tent--there were several of us in this huge, big tent. This is where we had our staff parties. [laughter] Jimmy Cullom--and our staff parties mostly consisted of Jimmy Cullom telling jokes, he was a wonderful joke-teller. We would sit in there and laugh and talk and drink beer and have a staff get-together.

Over the years the staff parties have become incredibly elaborate affairs. Different departments put on different parties with special themes. You could do whole chapters on the themes around some of the Lair parties, the Saturday night staff parties that they've had up there and still do. It had a fairly modest beginning, but it did set the tradition for a staff get-together on Saturday night. Ask me some other questions.

LaBerge: Okay. Mike talked about how important those parties have become, the idea of keeping the staff in camp.

Mrs. Koll: Yes, yes. This was a very important consideration. It builds, over the summer, this incredible sense of community. The kind of thing that really surprisingly--in retrospect maybe not surprisingly--but the kind of cohesion, the social cohesion that then lasts past the time people graduate from Cal and continues on to form their future social life. You find that whole groups of people come together based on their experience at the Lair. They maintain these lifelong friendships. At the time something is getting started you have no sense that this is what is going to happen, but it does. And it did.

LaBerge: Well, so after that first summer you came back again.

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes, yes.

LaBerge: And also in the dining halls?

Mrs. Koll: No. I worked with Maxine Holder, she was in charge of the Kub Korral, and I helped out in the Kub Korral.

LaBerge: Now when you worked in the dining hall, did you have anything to do with the cooking? Or were you kind of serving--?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, no. I just ate the nuts off of the desserts. [laughter] No, nothing, nothing, whatsoever. There was a wonderful cook by the name of Joe Jackson. He had been a cook at the SAE house. This has been one of the interesting changes in the Lair. The cooking staff, early on, was almost always minority,

almost always black, and had come from their jobs at the University, where they worked from September until June, and then they were free from June to September. Joe had worked for the SAEs a long time, and then he would work at the Lair, and then he would return to the SAEs.

Over the years a very interesting thing began to happen. We became very interested in trying to recruit minorities onto the staff, and because the positions in the kitchen were really quite well paid, in many cases now you have--oh, they get their cooking staff from any place they can. But it's not unusual to find students who want those cooking jobs, just simply because they are well paid.

LaBerge: And do they need some kind of special experience?

Mrs. Koll: They should have! [laughter] Sometimes they don't; sometimes they do an apprenticeship for one summer at the Lair. Sometimes a cook will work and train someone. It's the kind of cooking, that if you're smart and if you've spent one summer as an apprentice, you can learn. You can do it. It's hard work, but it's doable.

LaBerge: What about the idea of trying to hire more minority on the staff?

Mrs. Koll: It's a very important hiring policy to attempt to do this and it should be maintained. But one of the things that they keep running into is the fact that the minority students at UC Berkeley are in such demand, and they can get more money at other summer jobs. You can't pay a differential. So what you tend to have are people who can't afford to work at the Lair, in a certain sense. Now if you work there one summer and you do particularly well and you become a program director, then I think you're in a very good position to ask and get more money.

This is an issue that may be more of a problem in the future than in the past. I do not believe there is any problem with minority hiring per se. I think with the students that we have now, there is a very comfortable kind of affiliation, and something that will happen very naturally and very comfortably. The problems will probably be with what can be paid for staff salaries and the increased costs to students.

LaBerge: How long did you stay on the staff?

Supportive Spouse

Mrs. Koll: Just those two years. And then after that, I was never paid, I was not on the payroll. The association currently has a different policy. If it's a husband and wife team, they will pay the wife as well as the husband, but that was not the practice at that time. I was at the Lair for a lot of reasons. In the fifties, you know, this wasn't the social model to pay a wife. I call it the "minister's model" of employment. The man is hired; the wife is "supportive."

LaBerge: Yes, although--. Did you spend the whole summer there?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes. There was never a time in which you were not seen as being in a capacity--. You see, this just wasn't the way we were socialized. You supported your husband. This was the format. And of course we'd come right out of the war and then we went into the Ozzie and Harriet format of the fifties. There was great social support for this manner of employment. No, it would have been unthinkable that I should have asked for money. After all, "I got to be up there," and actually, I enjoyed it. So it wasn't a problem.

LaBerge: You really would have to just spend--.

Mrs. Koll: Over the years, You didn't always have couples who were equally as thrilled about being up there. So you would get these funny kinds of responses, and it would go everywhere from, "How could you stand it?" to "Oh, you lucky thing!" So I realized it had to do with the perception of how people were looking at the situation. It was just as easy to be at the Lair with small children for the whole summer as it was to go up there for a week.

LaBerge: Oh, that's for sure. Or to stay here and tow kids around to different activities.

Mrs. Koll: Yes, it was great. It was great because we both were really very much of one mind in terms of understanding what it was about. I think there were four things that probably contributed to the enormous growth of the Lair, particularly after the fifties. One, we'd come out of the war, and I think people had a pent-up longing to have a different expression for their lives. Then you had people who were interested in establishing families, and you had people who had connections with the University, and you had people who liked the outdoors. So you had those four things that, I believe, came together and made for a very compatible grouping. Because you have people

who were returning year after year after year. Now we see their grandchildren up there. This became a family summer tradition for many campers.

LaBerge: Well, what kinds of things would you do when you were there all summer? Supposedly you didn't have a job, but you probably had certain responsibilities that you covered. People must have come to you with their problems.

Mrs. Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: You couldn't remain anonymous.

Mrs. Koll: No, but I did have to be very careful not to operate on borrowed authority. It certainly helped to have another pair of eyes and ears. There were certain kinds of things that staff members could come to me with, and particularly if they were of a personal nature and you could do something, you could talk things over. I always believed it was appropriate to have a woman up there be--.

Well, first of all, it's a family camp, and so I think there is a role in that capacity. There are special hazards, I think, when you have your children in the environment, but I would say on the whole, they benefit tremendously from the experience, mostly because there are so many other kids around. At the Lair campers tend to have pretty much the same notion about kids, so that you're not dealing with a group of people who have very different value systems. And certainly you get a very strong orientation for the University in that environment. We just enjoyed the campers; we had a lot of contact with them. We always made sure we had the speakers over.

LaBerge: To your house beforehand?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, no. To the tent. We lived right in the middle of the staff. And I remember Mike and the staff--the staff will go night and day--Mike would have to get up at night to try to calm them down as the noise escalated. We really lived right in the middle of the staff.

LaBerge: This is when your children were little and they were trying to take naps and--?

Mrs. Koll: Yes. If they were tired enough, they napped. They managed. That wasn't a problem. I would say we were immersed in it. We really didn't think very much about it, because it just grew up around us, and this was how we got the job done.

LaBerge: Was this when you were at Camp Gold?

Mrs. Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: And was it the same when you moved to Camp Blue?

Mrs. Koll: No. Our children were older. At this point in time, Mike, I think, wanted to be a little bit removed. So we hiked up to our tent, which I believe Mike really preferred at Blue. I liked Camp Gold. For one thing, it was flat, and so the children could be on their own a good deal more easily. I never really minded being in the middle of everybody; some people might. It just never particularly bothered me one way or the other.

LaBerge: Would you take breaks during the summer and come back down here?

Mrs. Koll: Well if we took breaks--no, usually we would rent this place [in Berkeley] out. If we took breaks we would go back into the Emigrant Basin. We would go back out fishing, on horseback, for a day. We usually looked for more of the same. We would very frequently stay in the environment and just explore other areas.

Pursuit of Master's Degree and Doctorate

LaBerge: Well, what other things did you do besides have the speakers over or be an extra ear for staff problems? Did you help with the programming?

Mrs. Koll: No. In fact, I tried very hard not to. I really stayed out of it. Then after a while I started thinking about going back to school again myself. One of the things I had a chance to see was that in the early years, small children take a lot of your time. But as the families kept coming back year after year, I began to see that after a while they became quite independent, parents from their children, children from their parents. So I began to think ahead in terms of the kinds of things that I was interested in doing when my kids were a little bit older.

It was my experience at the Lair that made me start thinking about, "What do I want to do when I get older?" This is what put me back in school for a master's degree, that led to the job at the College of Alameda. Then I kept going in school and got a doctorate from Nova University. I would

attribute my continuing education to seeing the Lair program one year to the next, the kind of evolution of the family. This is a very important learning experience for me.

LaBerge: You know, Mike has talked about that, and he's very proud of you for doing that, for pursuing that and completing it.

Mrs. Koll: It took a lot of persistence.

LaBerge: I'm sure of it. What is your master's and your doctorate in?

Mrs. Koll: The master's is in counseling, and the doctorate is in community college administration.

LaBerge: So how many years did that take you?

Mrs. Koll: [laughter] The master's--let's see. I wanted to be out and working before Lynne started college. I was able to accomplish that in 1975. I must have started that about 1970. That probably took me about five years. And then it took me seven years to complete the doctorate.

LaBerge: Well, it is a lot of persistence, because you could have given up any time.

Mrs. Koll: Yes. It was just that after a while you have enough time and money and ego involved, you decide, "I can't quit now. I'll never be able to live with myself." So I did it and I'm glad I did it.

Teaching at College of Alameda

LaBerge: What is your position now?

Mrs. Koll: I'm an instructor, which I enjoy, at College of Alameda and active in the faculty senate.

LaBerge: What courses do you teach?

Mrs. Koll: Well, now I'm teaching a good deal of psychology, transfer psychology, Psych 1A. I still teach in and coordinate a program for working with people who have disabilities at the paraprofessional level. One of the things happening now, is that we're getting so many of the students from the California State University system, not so much from UC, but from San Francisco State and Cal State Hayward. These schools have had

cut backs. They have been whacked back. So the students are trying to get some of their lower division courses here at the community colleges, and we're finding ourselves presently struggling with enrollment management.

We have been ADA [Average Daily Attendance] driven for so very long that the community colleges have always been looking for more students. (The schools receive so much money per student.) Now the time has come--and this happened probably within the past six to nine months--all of a sudden we have these students knocking at our doors and we're capped. By that I mean we'll only be paid for so many students; we can admit more but will not be funded. Here we have all these students and the legislature won't fund us. We're saying, "We can't do this." As a result we're turning away students, and I think there's a feeling that, "Oh, my, wouldn't it be nice to have some of these students instead of some of the students that we currently work and struggle with,"--but who need the community college system desperately.

I see the community colleges now trying to offer more transfer courses, and yet trying to serve the people who have traditionally come to community colleges because they're immigrants or may have poor academic skills. They may never have finished high school. I think there are going to be some real losers in this. I believe many of the community colleges are going to want to serve the students who can't get into the four-year schools, but who are qualified. In terms of the mission of the community colleges, I think they're going to become more identified with lower division requirements and probably be less available to serve the students that they traditionally have helped: the underprepared and newly-arrived immigrants as well as those who need new or upgraded job skills; I think this is unfortunate.

LaBerge: Well in addition, when you were at the Lair you would see the different ways that the family grew up and that contributing to your wanting to go back to school--was it also just being around the University people and that spirit?

Mrs. Koll: Yes, definitely.

University Speakers at the Lair

Mrs. Koll: --so it was one of the real treats to hear the speakers who came to the Lair from the University.

LaBerge: And of course, you had a different speaker every week.

Mrs. Koll: Two, two a week. The speakers from the University have served the vital function of keeping the alumni at the Lair aware of current issues on the campus. If, after you have graduated from U.C.B. you do not return to campus, your perceptions tend to become "frozen in time." The speakers bring an up-to-date perspective. It was marvelous, it was a delight.

LaBerge: Do you want to tell me some of your favorites?

Mrs. Koll: One of the favorites, I think his name is Hart. He's an engineer. He has interviewed people who have experiences with UFOs. I would always listen to him, just in awe of this information, and I could never quite figure out how much credibility was placed on his particular kind of experience and data. I've always expected to hear him somehow be discredited. But I understand now, in terms of people who have had experiences with UFOs, that he's considered an expert in the field. He interviews them under hypnosis. I'm trying to think of others.

I remember hearing Dr. Wendell Stanley talk about believing that cancer was caused by a virus. I remember his selling his stock in the cigarette companies when it became clear to him cancer was related to smoking. He was one of the first to believe the research data. This was years ago in the early 1950s. I remember hearing Doug Kelley talk about his experiences as a psychiatrist in the Nuremberg trials.

Setting Up Camp

LaBerge: Did you go up early and help set camp up?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: With your kids, too?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: What kind of things would you do?

Mrs. Koll: Whatever needed to be done. Dig the mice out of the chocolate. [laughter] Whatever had to be done. Restore whatever had survived the winter--and most of it did. But a lot of the wildlife moved in, so it had to be sorted and cleaned. You

tried to put away as clean as you could, but by the time you came back to it, everything had been invaded, if in fact it had not been broken into. This always needed attention. You had to be careful about that. We did ski up at Dodge Ridge on a number of occasions, and sometimes then we would ski into the Lair. We do have some pictures where the snow was so deep that you were skiing on the level of the top of the tennis courts.

LaBerge: So were you doing downhill and cross-country skiing?

Mrs. Koll: Well, at that time we were on downhills, but we were going cross-country on downhill skills.

LaBerge: How long would you be up there, setting camp up?

Mrs. Koll: The timing depended on when the snow left. You had construction work that had to be done, you had the general setting up of the tents--I would do some of the cooking up there. But this was a good long time ago. I remember one year when we went up there and I said to Mike, "Mike, I don't want to spend the whole weekend cooking up there. I want to do something besides cooking in that kitchen." It turned out that was one of the weekends it snowed in May. People were killing for a chance to work in the kitchen so they could stay warm! [laughter] It was a late snow, and it was a cold one.

Lynne and Loretta

LaBerge: Well, how would your kids get involved while you were doing this? Or what was the work for the kids?

Mrs. Koll: Well, no. We had children, let's see--. Lynn arrived five years after we were married, so we had a number of years up there without children. They mostly either played around the tent area, or when they got older, took part in the activities. They did this as it seemed right for them.

They were very much aware that they were not the campers, and this was something that we didn't have to say a great lot about. They understood the perspective. They very frequently formed [friendships] with other staff members' children up there. Bev and Terry Cole were up there at the time. Our children were approximately the same ages. So there were four little girls that played together quite a bit. That was over in the tent area where we all had tents close together. There was lots to do.

- LaBerge: So would your children join in with the other activities?
- Mrs. Koll: Some, yes.
- LaBerge: Why don't you tell me when they were born?
- Mrs. Koll: Lynne was born in 1956, Loretta was born in 1959.
- LaBerge: Did you go up with them as babies?
- Mrs. Koll: Yes. Lynne was born in April of 1956 and I went up there with her in June. She got along just fine. We lived in the school house the first part of the summer and then moved into the tent at Gold at the end. It was almost easier that year than the next year after.
- LaBerge: When they're toddling around.
- Mrs. Koll: --when they're toddling around. It's pretty dusty out there. You can keep a tiny baby clean but by the time a toddler is walking around and is dirty most of the time and needs to be picked up, there's a lot of washing that needs to be done in that environment.
- LaBerge: Well, I would think that your perspective as a woman would have added a lot to Mike's job. For instance, just knowing that, because the moms are, let's say, the ones who are chasing after the toddlers.
- Mrs. Koll: Yes. It would be difficult to say this was some sort of studied approach. That was not the case. It just simply grew in response to family needs.
- LaBerge: Sort of as the needs changed.
- Mrs. Koll: Yes, exactly.
- LaBerge: The way the kids' program was developed, to add teens and pre-teens.

Camper Feedback

- Mrs. Koll: Yes, very definitely. There was always a good deal of feedback, a great deal of feedback from the campers. Their needs shaped the growing programs.

LaBerge: Why don't you tell me a little bit about the feedback, because Mike said a little.

Mrs. Koll: Well, he would ask for written comments and evaluations at the end of each week. Then in terms of trying to set a program that people could live with comfortably. I guess one of the philosophies was to have lots to do, but make it optional. You wanted to be sure to have dinner early enough so that you didn't have unnecessary drunken brawls. You wanted to have something that was in reasonably good taste and appropriate for a family university environment. You had to have some mechanism for dealing with situations when they got out of hand.

LaBerge: What was that? What was the mechanism for that?

Mrs. Koll: Well, if it was a staff member and serious, they got fired, "sent down the hill." If it was a camper--people who have too much to drink do some pretty strange things. You have some groups of people that would come up after they'd worked hard all year, and this was their chance just to revert. You had occasions of people drinking at night and skinnydipping around the pool--not that the staff didn't do that on occasions--but you needed to let it be known that if they wanted to come back, that there were certain kinds of behavior that needed to be observed. And this didn't happen frequently, because most people were very pleasant to be with. For the most part you're dealing with a very fine cross-section of a group of people. Problem behavior was not a major issue.

Plus the fact that Mike has the capacity to step into a situation and provide "direction." People take him seriously, very seriously. He doesn't threaten anybody, he just lets it be known what is appropriate. Dave Gardner said it well at Mike's retirement from the Alumni Association. Mike can tell you "how things should be and how they should not be."

Growth of the Lair

LaBerge: Well, how have you seen the Lair grow?

Mrs. Koll: I would say that it has stayed very much within its original format. The Lair grew out of the Wawona House Party. I think the concept was originated by Bob Sibley, when they had the two Lairs. One at Shasta and then one here at Pinecrest that was started in 1948, and then in '49 they ran them both. And then

at the end of '49 they decided they should give up Shasta, simply because it was so far away.

They kept a number of the traditions they had there, like greeting people with punch after that long, dusty road into camp. It was a way of welcoming people when they came in. That still is a tradition at the Lair.

I think it has stayed with the family format, it has stayed with the University, it has stayed with the camping format. I think the camping format is a very important one to maintain. You can be a first-rate camp, but if you try to go beyond that in that particular environment, you're just going to be a second-rate heaven-knows-what. I believe it has always been wise to stay with camping. Otherwise you are competing with other resorts.

LaBerge: And those were some of the comments on the evaluations?

Mrs. Koll: No. I think the people who have been closest to it have seen that that was its strength. The people who haven't cared about it usually know they don't like it within the first few days they're there. Some of the funny early experiences: I remember a lady sitting on one of the benches and looking at the food and her comment was, "I can't imagine why people are up here." And, "What I really don't understand is that there are so many doctors up here." [laughter] She said, "You know they're smart, and they should know better. This place is so unsanitary!"

LaBerge: Oh, that's great.

I think you're right. The program is really one of its strengths, in keeping it simple.

Mrs. Koll: Yes. In keeping it simple and not apologizing for the fact that it's a camp. And just making sure that people are well-informed, if people come up expecting certain kinds of amenities, they're going to go into a real culture shock. But if they come up there and they know what to expect, they are more apt to enjoy the experience. You find many people who come back dutifully year after year because their kids have enjoyed it. So they do this with their family, and then they go to other places for their vacation, for their more adult vacation.

LaBerge: So do you go up there now?

Mrs. Koll: Yes, we do. We have a wonderful time. We go up at the beginning of the summer, and then we usually go up at the end again. When we go up in the summer, we spend some time there and then we go back into the Emigrant Basin. We go back and camp out in the wilderness area and then come back and spend a few days. We like to go up at the end of the summer because this is the "special interest week." Then there is the singles week and we like to enjoy part of that also. It has, because of a number of reasons, I think the past few years the Lair has been particularly well booked. For one, it's a reasonable vacation. I think the economy does make a difference in people's vacation plans, certainly over these past few years.

The Lair Spirit

LaBerge: Could you comment on the Lair spirit and what you think it is?

Mrs. Koll: It's a difficult thing to describe, but it exists. I'm not sure I can put it into words. Certainly it's a sense of community, and it's a sense of camaraderie. When we were up at the Tahoe Alumni Center, we ran into such a different group of people that worked in the resort area that we began to doubly appreciate the kind of staff that we had. The staff that came to the Lair are people with whom you're going to be very happy to have longterm relationships. And you're really, in many cases, seeing them at a very important transition part in their lives.

When we were up at the Tahoe Alumni Center, we couldn't have this kind of student assistance year round. Very frequently we were dealing with people who were--it seemed to me they fell into three categories. They either wanted to get next to a facility where they could--I hate to say it--rob it, or they had a drinking problem, or they wanted to work long enough so they could be fired to draw unemployment. They were very itinerant people, and very frequently they were very lost kind of people, which is not unusual for resort areas such as Tahoe.

I believe the kind of people that you have at the Lair are people who do their job and then do a great deal more. I think there's willingness to do the great deal more. That contributes to the Lair spirit.

- LaBerge: Well, they're there twenty-four hours and so they're kind of on call, really, even though that's not part of their job description.
- Mrs. Koll: That's right.
- LaBerge: They've got to be ready to get up and go and do something--fill in or--.
- Mrs. Koll: The whole thing is above and beyond the call of duty.
- LaBerge: Right. Now did you feel that way when you were up there for the summer as a family--did you feel like you were on call?
- Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes. Oh, absolutely. You have this very clear sense that this is not your vacation; this is their vacation. You know, you never know from one moment to the next when you're dealing with some very serious emergency. So you can't be so caught up in some sort of hilarious activity that you're not ready to deal with whatever comes up.
- LaBerge: So what kind of activities would you participate in yourself?
- Mrs. Koll: Oh, just about everything. I mean, I wouldn't enter the tournaments or you know, be part of the shows.
- LaBerge: But did you go on the hikes?
- Mrs. Koll: Some, yes. I always went on the fishing trips, which I really enjoyed doing. It was just--you made an effort to meet the people, you made an effort to talk to them and listen to them. You were there as part of the staff to see that the program worked. There is something to being visible, available, and approachable. I think your presence says to people that what's happening is important. We wanted to be around and see what's going on. In a sense there is always--I don't want to say an agenda to be moved, but there are program goals to be accomplished.
- LaBerge: Well tell me this, would you and Mike take a vacation later?
- Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes. We went camping. [laughter]
- LaBerge: Just by yourself?
- Mrs. Koll: Yes. A number of times we went back to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, went hunting. Oh, yes, yes. Definitely. Although people always thought that our whole summer was a vacation. So we just let them think that.

LaBerge: That's right. [laughter]

Mrs. Koll: There was no point telling them.

People

LaBerge: Well, do you have any anecdotes? I'll tell you a couple of things that Mike has mentioned, but I'm sure you've got others. The year that the Camp Gold kitchen burned. Once when there was a bear in camp.

Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Joe Jackson's Buick, he's talked about that.

Mrs. Koll: Yes, yes. That was a wonderful thing for Joe. Yes, well I'm sure Mike mentioned shooting the bear with a .22?

LaBerge: Yes.

Mrs. Koll: Okay. Oh, the anecdotes of the Lair. I really almost have to think about those because there are so very, very many of them. I'm sure he's talked about Bob Albo and the assessor.

LaBerge: Yes, he has.

Mrs. Koll: Bob was one of the people that over the years, people keep asking about Bob, how he is. Very, very memorable. Mike White, they ask about him. Lots of anecdotes about Mike.

LaBerge: Now was he athletic director when he was up there?

Mrs. Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: How about, as you're thinking about anecdotes, memorable staff or memorable campers?

Mrs. Koll: Well, I think perhaps one of the most memorable groups of campers had to do with Bob Tuck. And then there was Adrian Kragen and Bud Blue. They in turn encompassed a good many other people who were part of the group. A memorable group were around Bill Milliken, and they were kind of the martini group, and I'm sure Mike has mentioned that.

LaBerge: No, he hasn't.

Mrs. Koll: They came up and they were very much their own kind of united little group and they were up there for their kids' sakes. But they hung together and they played bridge and they came up for years and years and were very strong supporters of the Lair.

Promoting Camp Camaraderie

Mrs. Koll: But there tended to be--and this was one of the things that was at one point the strength and at some points I think was something that people were concerned about--groups of people who came up that tended to dominate certain weeks. So you had campers, new campers who were feeling they were just kind of living around the fringes.

Each week did have its own particular kind of characteristic. This is one of the things that you needed to work with and appreciate, have some way of incorporating the people who had come into the camp for the first time so that they didn't feel that they were not part of this main group. This was always an issue. You didn't want to discourage the people who loved it and had been loyal to the camp. I think there were many people who made an effort to include other people once--and this is a kind of thing that you wanted to bring to someone's attention without burdening them with the problem. In other words it wasn't their problem, they were there on their vacation and they were not responsible.

Currently the Lair has done a number of things that I think have been very good. One is to have a reception for the whole group of people coming in, for the whole camp, and then to have the manager greet the newcomers and take people around the camp. There isn't the sense of people coming for the first time and finding this kind of ready-made social group that has sort of taken over and dominated the situation. You do have people who ask, "Well, is the so-and-so group going to be up there?" because they want to be there with them or they don't want to be there. You have people who very definitely go to the third week or the fourth week or the fifth week. You want to be sure that the people who supported it are appreciated and at the same time, people who are new have a chance to come and enjoy the Lair.

LaBerge: For instance, would you make a special effort to greet the first-year campers?

Mrs. Koll: Yes. You would. When the camp was small and people were coming for the first time and if they weren't part of a major group you would want them to feel welcome. We would not want to be right in the middle of the social group that was the most predominate. That's an inappropriate role. We wanted to see that the whole program goes.

Staff

LaBerge: Right. Have you seen a change in the staff?

Mrs. Koll: They're possibly better. I would say that for the most part, they are better at what they do. I would say it's been improved. I would say the current refinements have contributed significantly.

LaBerge: Refinements like flush toilets?

Mrs. Koll: No, just in terms of the programming, in terms of very talented people, in terms of recruitment of staff. A lot of the staff tend to recruit staff because they know people who they know would enjoy it. If you're up there as a staff member and you don't enjoy it, this is a miserable experience. It is truly miserable. You're living on top of each other, there isn't anything that you can do that isn't noticed. You have no place to go to avoid a certain amount of scrutiny. You have to be reasonably comfortable with being kidded, and you have to know that you're going to "get it" in terms of some sort of comments or observations. It just goes with that particular job.

LaBerge: Has there ever been a staff member who left during the summer-- they just couldn't take it?

Mrs. Koll: Yes, yes.

LaBerge: But I'm sure not very many.

Mrs. Koll: Not too many. Though most of the reasons that people go home is because they've had an injury or they've gotten really sick. But every now and then you find somebody that--this just wasn't for them. And usually it's within the first couple of weeks. It's just more than they can cope with. They get too tired; it's overwhelming.

LaBerge: Well, during the whole year, did you have any involvement with the Lair or with the Alumni Association?

Mrs. Koll: You mean from September to--.

LaBerge: Did you have staffers over during the year or did you go on the trips with Mike?

Mrs. Koll: Early on we used to have the staff over, when there was just the one camp. We wanted to keep things together and to thank the staff. And then as it got bigger, there were other ways to do this, so it became less personalized and more of an institutionalized kind of a response. And I think there was a real strength to that transition.

Alumni Association Trips

Mrs. Koll: In terms of going on trips? When Mike was an executive director, we went on many wonderful trips. Oh, yes.

LaBerge: To the different alumni clubs?

Mrs. Koll: Oh, some of that. No, I'm talking about trips to Europe and Africa and those kinds of trips.

LaBerge: And so this was part of the job.

Mrs. Koll: Yes. Well, when he was executive director.

LaBerge: To promote the school? Or to meet with alumni?

Mrs. Koll: In part, however, the trips were basically another business venture; this was a way of having a travel format. Here, this appealed to a much different constituency. You had older alumni, you had people who had discretionary incomes, and you had people who wanted a certain amount of planning done for them. You had people who wanted to travel with a compatible group of people that shared similar interests.

When this was started they would do a trip or two a year a number of years ago. Then as demand grew they were able to approach the travel agencies so that sponsoring a trip for the Alumni Association became a competitive business. In other words the vendors would present to a review panel the possibilities for a number of trips. And so Mike, when he was executive director, would then bargain with them in terms of the kinds of things that he felt they should offer. Of course, with travel agencies anywhere, if you have x number of people traveling, then you get x number free, whatever. One of the

things that the Alumni Association did was, in addition to having industry travel leaders, they wanted to be sure that they had some representative of the Alumni Association go. They are called the host couple. And it's intended as quality control. You can think of it as--I hate to even say this, but someone who sees to it that the unusual and personal events are given attention, such as illnesses or even death. You can have very unexpected events.

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LaBerge: We were talking about the alumni trips and role of the host couple.

Mrs. Koll: If there are groups of people who have come together and they've formed their own comfortable social unit, this is fine. You just let them enjoy the trip and accommodate them as best you can. But there are always a number of people who come that are there alone or socially isolated in some kind of way, and you can provide a social focal point and there again, be visible, available, and approachable.

There have been any number of occasions when, because the host couple has been there, they have insisted on certain kinds of accommodations or schedules or transportation that possibly the representative of the travel agency, that had been sent along, might not have been as willing to listen to. When you have somebody that is representing the Alumni Association, the travel vendor knows that they're part of the reporting group. One of the things they ask all the members to do is to evaluate the trip in order to have a chance for feedback. That travel program has grown substantially over the years, and it's a very fine travel program.

LaBerge: Is it the one advertised in the California Monthly? Bear Treks or something like that?

Mrs. Koll: Yes, Bear Treks.

LaBerge: I'm glad that you mentioned that because I haven't asked Mike about that.

Mrs. Koll: It really took off under Mike and then the person who came in and who has done a beautiful job with that has been Carolyn Sheaff. I don't know if you know her input into that, in terms of developing this particular segment of the Alumni Association, the total program, has just given it a whole new dimension. It's reached out to another group of alumni. So that you have people there who will travel with Bear Treks, I

think, with the same kind of loyalty that people have kept coming back to the Lair.

LaBerge: And this is Carolyn's focus?

Mrs. Koll: Yes, this is her travel program.

LaBerge: Well, have you gotten involved in the Alumni Association in other ways, too?

Prytanean Society

Mrs. Koll: The only thing I've done recently has been in charge of the activities for Prytanean [Society], so I have been down there making sure that there were desserts and that we collected the forks afterwards. [laughter]

LaBerge: I think that's where Willa met you?

Mrs. Koll: Yes.

LaBerge: Tell me a little bit about Prytanean.

Mrs. Koll: I was invited to be an honorary member a number of years ago. This was because of my long association, I'm sure, as Mike's spouse and because of the number of things you do for University programs and for University students. Now, I graduated from UC, but you have to appreciate, I was a fun-and-games student. So that I did what I needed to do, you get in and out in four years.

If anybody had told me when I was a senior at college that I would ever even think of going back for graduate degrees, I would have said it was the furthest thing from my mind. I really tended to think in fairly short-term goals. I had no grand plan. It's just that you get to a certain point and then other things seem possible. So that was really how that came about. So I felt very honored to be invited. [laughter]

LaBerge: Well, had you traveled to the Alumni Club meetings and things like that with him?

Mrs. Koll: Some, yes. And that was interesting to me, because in many cases we were seeing people that we had seen at the Lair. I can understand how people who have not had any kind of association with their spouse would feel like they were dragged

along, as sort of excess whatever. But if you're seeing people that you've known, then there's a very important frame of reference. This was enjoyable, it was something I liked. And if it worked out, I did it. If it didn't work out, I didn't do it.

Impact of the Alumni Association and the Lair

LaBerge: What kind of impact do you think the Lair has had on the University? Or broader, what the Alumni Association has had on the University?

Mrs. Koll: I think one of the things that has made it truly unique is the fact that it is independent, and I think the Lair has helped keep it independent.

LaBerge: Financially?

Mrs. Koll: The Lair has helped keep the Alumni Association financially independent of the University. And I think there are times when the University has a good deal of money to do with, that the Alumni Association looks at that and thinks, "We could solve some of our financial problems if we became part of that." But at this point in time the association is fortunate to be independent. I think you can look to the association and you can say, "What we can do on our own, we can enjoy the benefits of." I think this is a perception that possibly swings back and forth. There are times when the association would be easier to deal with as an organization if it were directly under one of the vice chancellors.

I think there's enough talent and tradition around that there's no reason in the world that that association should ever have to lose its independent status. Absolutely not. Good heavens, most of the people associated with that have been able to maintain their own businesses. They not only do well, they do very well. This kind of leadership can manage the Alumni Association without giving up their independence.

LaBerge: Do you think the independence then helps the alumni to have, if not a say in what happens to the University, but some kind of impact?

Mrs. Koll: Absolutely. I don't think there's any question about it. I think that you have flexibility and I think you have an

accountability, well beyond what you could have if you were dependent.

Campus Issues

LaBerge: What kind of a change did you see, for instance, during the Free Speech Movement? I guess that's probably the most prominent, but in other times of turmoil?

Mrs. Koll: Well, my perception of what happened was that the people who were in the administration at the time the Free Speech came along were people who had been educated in a much different governance model. They were used to dealing with situations that weren't power confrontations. And I think that the issue of power confrontation--I literally mean street power confrontation--was something for which a good many of the chancellors, first of all, had no stomach for, no experience in this area. They had no emotional set for it, and I believe it just ground them up.

Dialogues were started that possibly--once they got started in the street, seemed to need to be resolved in the street. I think people in retrospect were able to be better prepared, after they had been through these traumatic experiences. The administration had a better sense of how to anticipate some of the problems and plan ahead so that they did not escalate out of control. Some of the things that have happened recently could have gotten completely out of control, but I think in terms of now having a historical perspective and being able to think through the kinds of events that might occur, this has enabled the leadership to head some problems off at-the-pass.

LaBerge: You're talking about People's Park now?

Mrs. Koll: Yes. These kinds of events. All of those were on the verge of getting out of hand. However, because people had been through similar kinds of experiences and had learned, they were able to anticipate and to call upon the people they needed to talk to ahead of time, and to call in the numbers of forces that they needed so that they didn't look as if they could be overwhelmed. I think the fact that the University looked vulnerable and inexperienced--and they were--is part of what contributed to the enormous problems that occurred.

Of course, the perception of the alumni was very damaging to the University for a long time. I think one of the real problems was how do you maintain what the University stands for--this must be done--and still live with the criticisms? This is what takes real leadership. That's a very difficult issue and always will be.

Mike's Strengths

- LaBerge: How do you think Mike did that? Because in a lot of ways, he was receiving a lot of the criticism. I mean not him personally, but he'd hear what people had to say.
- Mrs. Koll: He's very comfortable from where he comes from in his perspective and point-of-view. He really is. I think playing baseball and being heckled helped him a lot. [laughter] I mean that seriously. You know, you've got a plan, you've got a program, you have an objective. Part of the psychological warfare of a game is to see if you can get psyched out by the other team or by being heckled. I think you just figure that's part of it. And if people go into management positions and they've never had this kind of experience, it's harder for them to stay focused.
- LaBerge: He really weathered that whole episode.
- Mrs. Koll: Oh, yes.
- LaBerge: --with the alumni, and it didn't bother him.
- Mrs. Koll: No, no. Even today when he goes up and down the state and he's in the Valley, and of course he's with a lot of very conservative people and people are just saying, you know, "How come they can do this?" and "How come they can do that?" And he says, "Well yes, I really understand where you're coming from, and there's no question but that you're right about that. But on the other hand, you have to consider this--." And so for him it's not a major problem. He tends to be a fairly conservative person anyway, but he will listen to and appreciate other points of view.
- LaBerge: Well you know, I want to at the end just ask you what his strengths are, as you see them. But before I do that, do you have anything you want to say or include?
- Mrs. Koll: Perhaps I should think about that a little bit more.

LaBerge: We can have another session.

Mrs. Koll: Okay. Well, he's smart. He's had a broad range of experiences. He learns. He likes what he does.

LaBerge: And he certainly seems to like people.

Mrs. Koll: Oh, no question. And people like him. They don't always agree with him, but they know where he's coming from, and I think they trust that. That's a very important part of interpersonal relationships. You'd like some anecdotes, wouldn't you? Let me think about the anecdotes.

LaBerge: And we could maybe in a month or so, meet again and quote anecdotes about the Lair, I guess staff, campers--. When you were on the staff, and I guess your perspective, too, as a family person, which you talked about a little bit.

Mrs. Koll: Okay, let me think on this. These are the kinds of things, when you get talking, particularly with other staff members, they come up so effortlessly.

LaBerge: You can make a list.

Mrs. Koll: Yes, this would be the way to do it. Let me do that on my own; I know that would be very helpful. We had a group here just the other day, Nancy Miller Katz. We had a baby shower for her. It was all the Lair group and we were just sitting around, laughing and talking about who was doing what and did they remember when. Those are the kinds of things that have very personal kinds of reminiscences, that tend to make a very strong connection in terms of friendships.

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LAIR PIONEER: AN INTERVIEW WITH JANOR KINGWELL TUCK

An Interview Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1993

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name JANE ELEANOR KINGWELL TUCK

Date of birth DEC. 15, 1913 Birthplace SAN FRANCISCO

Father's full name William Aphonse Kingwell

Occupation OWNER-Kingwell Bros. Brass^{Co.} Birthplace San Francisco

Mother's full name Helen Macaulay Kingwell

Occupation school teacher Birthplace San Francisco

Your spouse Robert George Tuck

Occupation Atlas Heating Co. CEO. Birthplace San Francisco

Your children William K. Tuck, Loretta Monaci, Kathleen Rogers

Theresa Meyer, Hugh M. Tuck, Gail Forbes, George C. Tuck
Robert D. Tuck

Where did you grow up? San Francisco

Present community Hillsborough

Education Notre Dame High School - U.C. Berkeley, A.B.

Occupation(s) Housewife

Areas of expertise Homemaking, Secretarial, Accounting

Other interests or activities Golf, swimming, Bridge, travel

Organizations in which you are active P.G.C.C. Treasurer, A.A.U.W. hon.
life member, Catholic Charities, Mission Hospice, Symphony League
Peninsula U.C. Alumni Club.

VIII LAIR PIONEER: AN INTERVIEW WITH JANOR KINGWELL TUCK

[Interview 13: March 3, 1993] ##

Undergraduate Days at Cal

LaBerge: Why don't you just tell me your first encounter with the University? How you decided to come here?

Tuck: Oh, it was just taken for granted since I was born, I think, that both myself and my sister would go to the University of California in Berkeley. We were just expected to get the grades to get there.

LaBerge: I see, okay. What did you major in?

Tuck: In political science, constitutional law.

LaBerge: It wasn't a big group of women that were in college in those days. Is that right?

Tuck: Well--oh, a good percentage, I'd say, yes. We weren't too far outnumbered.

LaBerge: You graduated in 1935, and I assume you met your husband [Robert Tuck] here.

Tuck: No. I'd known him for years before. But we never dated in college. [laughs]

We, my sister and I, came over here for rushing, which was the accepted procedure in those days. You came over before school opened and took a room at the Durant Hotel, and went through rushing with one of the mothers as a chaperone. [I]

joined Alpha Gamma Delta. I was a music major at first, and that involved running from one end of the campus down to the other, because the music buildings were not near each other at all. One was way up by Cowell Hospital, and the other was down by Edwards Field.

LaBerge: What made you change your mind from music to political science?

Tuck: Professor Cushing gave me a "C" in composition, and that was the kiss of death. An "A" I could take, or an "F" I could take, but not a "C". So I switched my major to econ[onmics] for a while, and took a lot of econ courses. Then I was in love with a guy who was going to be a lawyer, so I decided to take all the law courses I could. So I finished in political science. Needless to say, it wasn't my husband.

LaBerge: When did you and your husband get together?

Tuck: Oh, when we were just kids in grammar school. We used to play tennis at the same tennis courts and everything. But I never--he was just one of the neighbor's children, until we were both out of college.

LaBerge: What year were you married?

Tuck: Thirty-seven.

The Class of '35 Club

LaBerge: Did you keep up your University ties after that? Were you members of the Alumni Association or--

Tuck: Oh, definitely. Our '35 Club is still going. That was a group of women to start with who all were in activities. We met about once a month, after we graduated, at each other's houses, and just kept up that club for years. Norma Thorpe Cantin, you've undoubtedly met her.

LaBerge: Yes.

Tuck: She was our class secretary. My sister, Mary, was vice-president of the ASUC. There was Ruth Bohnet; Ruth Evans she was. She was the senior editor of Blue and Gold. And Mary Ross, who was editor of the Daily Cal[ifornian]. And Helen Kittle--I forget what her office was--but they were all girls in activities,

twelve in all. We still get together, not once a month, but at least a couple of times a year.

LaBerge: Oh, that's great. So the women had started already before the men got involved?

Tuck: Oh, yes. And we all started getting jobs, and the talk was all about work. Then everybody started getting married, one after another. The husbands would go and play poker or go to a movie or something while we had our meeting. Then gradually, they infiltrated our group. Then the talk was all about babies and washing machines and diapers. [laughs]

LaBerge: Where did you work after you graduated?

Tuck: I started with Ferry Morse Seed Company. And old Mr. Morse would be turning over in his grave now if he knew what happened to Pebble Beach.

LaBerge: Was this right in the city?

Tuck: Yes.

LaBerge: So then you and your husband were married in '37, and you must have had children fairly soon after that?

Tuck: Yes, King [William Kingwell Tuck] was born in '39. He's the oldest.

The Lair of the Bear, 1949

LaBerge: How did you hear about the Lair?

Tuck: I guess it was in the Cal Monthly, I think. They had a little box or something like that, yes. And at that time in '49, we had seven kids. It sounded like a good place to go with a bunch of kids.

LaBerge: I think so, too.

Tuck: Oh, and it was wonderful. Of course, the first camp was so primitive.

LaBerge: Why don't you describe it?

Tuck: Well, the road in was a very narrow dirt road, and not improved at all. The main buildings--the dining hall and the lodge, and I guess the store was there, I think--and then the rest was all tents. There was a row of washbasins out under the trees with cold water. [laughs] And chemical toilets! And the kids would nearly die before they'd go to the chemical toilets, because they hated them.

LaBerge: But that's all there was, right?

Tuck: Yes. And I can't remember about the showers. Isn't that funny? There must have been a shower room there, maybe one long one or something, and I can't remember what it looked like. Maybe I didn't shower often enough! [laughter] And the pool, of course, wasn't heated. They emptied it and filled it, because it didn't have any circulating system either, and so the water was always freezing cold. But that didn't matter to the kids.

LaBerge: When you signed up to go, did you sign up with some friends of yours, or did you just decide as a family?

Tuck: No, we just took a chance. We didn't know anybody when we arrived.

And oh, it was so funny. We did have seven kids, and Alice, our maid, and I was thinking, we'll have one tent for me and Bob, and then we'll have one tent for the older children, then we'll have another tent for Alice and the younger children. So when we got there, here's one big tent with eight--

LaBerge: For all of you!

Tuck: Double bunk beds--[laughing]

LaBerge: Oh, you are kidding! And that's where you stayed all--

Tuck: Yes, for a week.

LaBerge: I didn't know there were tents big enough for eight--

Tuck: Well, they had double bunk beds--or no, were there--we must have had two tents. [King can't remember either] And the baby, George, the youngest one, was in a playpen, or maybe the two little ones were in playpens probably.

LaBerge: That you had to haul along with you.

Tuck: Yes. [laughs] Oh, yes, we brought a panel truck along. In the evening the first day--as I said we didn't know anybody--and we

were kind of sitting on the steps of our tent, and got talking to the people sitting on the steps of the tent across. They were the Rhinehart family, Al and Marie, and children. We didn't see any evidence of any cocktail hour or anything, and we were kind of shy about mentioning the subject. But when we did, it was enthusiastically received. [laughter] And cocktail hour became a tradition up there.

LaBerge: So you kind of started it?

Tuck: Well, I don't know. We were late in the season. That was August, so that was sixth week, I guess.

LaBerge: Did you continue going up that same week the next years?

Tuck: Not always, but most of the time, because you get with a group and you all try to get there at the same time. And after a few years, as soon as the announcement would come out, we'd all be on the phone, "What week are we going to go, and who's going?"

LaBerge: Let's go back to the cocktail hour. Did you do this every night, and have people come over, or--

Tuck: Yes, you kind of go around to each other's tents.

LaBerge: Was there a main--like they have now--a main gathering, like Sunday night there's usually a cocktail party at the lodge?

Tuck: No, not at first. That was a later development.

Activities

LaBerge: What was there to do for the kids that first year?

Tuck: The store. [laughter] They would say, "Is it open yet?" And I guess Janie was probably in charge of the little ones, it seems to me, Janie Biedenbach. It's so long ago, I can't remember all the details. But I do know they had the Kub Korral, because that was a big feature. But they didn't have all the programs for teens and all that. They weren't divided in that many groups.

LaBerge: Did your children kind of fit into that, or did all the kids go to the Kub Korral?

Tuck: Not all of them, no. They had swimming lessons, and it seems to me they had tennis clinics, too, and baseball. Of course, the

baseball game--and oh, that was--Mike and the staff had a great rivalry with the campers. Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Oh, let's hear about that. I read someplace that your husband brought in a ringer one year, like a really good player, because the staff always had such good teams, and he brought in somebody from UCSF and put a mask on him to pitch, something like that?

Tuck: Oh, golly.

LaBerge: Maybe you weren't in on it.

Tuck: Maybe I wasn't! [laughter] The only pitcher I remember that came in was the milkman one time. He just parked his truck out there, leaving all the milk out in the sun. And Dr. Albronde, he was the camp doctor a couple of years, and he was a very good pitcher. But he pitched for the staff. I don't remember that. I think that might be a myth.

LaBerge: Oh, okay. Did your husband play, though?

Tuck: Oh, of course, yes. He either played or coached, or both.

LaBerge: Did they have games for the women then?

Tuck: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: So you played too?

Tuck: Yes. And most of the time, if anybody got a hit and started running for first base, they'd pull up lame with a charleyhorse before they ever got there, because none of them were used to running that hard. Oh, and our maid, Alice, we used to put her on first base. She just loved the baseball game, and that was her big moment of the week. I guess it was on Friday, wasn't it? Staff versus the campers.

Camper Shows

Tuck: And the campers used to put on shows, too, at the campfire. It wasn't all staff shows. Everybody would get in little groups and make up skits. They were hilarious most of the time.

LaBerge: Were you in any of those?

Tuck: Oh, yes, of course. [laughs]

LaBerge: Are there any ones you want to talk about?

Tuck: Oh, I remember Margie Chickering, and my sister-in-law Dorothy [Tuck Smith], and a couple of the other gals made one up about the washing machine. This was not the first year; this was after they had washing machines there. About people taking their clothes out when they'd go to use the washing machine; somebody else's clothes would be in there, and they would just take them out and put them away someplace, so she was taking them and dumping them on the ground. And she throws them out one after another, and some of them landed in the fire. [laughter]

And Juliet Lowenthal created the sensation with her take-off on Hamlet's soliloquy about the swimming pool. "To pee or not to pee, that is the question." [laughter] It was received with mixed feelings on the part of the parents.

LaBerge: It's actually pretty clean. One of the things Mike was saying that now for the staff shows--they have to meet certain standards and they have to censor a little bit beforehand, just so that it's family humor. Oh, that's great. How long did the camper shows go on?

Tuck: Oh, for a long time, yes. This is over forty years ago now.

LaBerge: Because now they just--they have a talent show, but it's not quite--

Tuck: No, they don't put on a real--. And of course, Harriet Blue was the one who orchestrated and wrote and directed in the later years these productions, which were really good. Have you heard of any of her songs?

LaBerge: I've heard of the My Lair Lady--

Tuck: Yes, My Lair Lady, and South Pinecrest. Whatever musical was popular at that time, she'd do a takeoff on it with all the songs and everything. We had the "mother singers" who sang in the dining room on Friday night. They used to take up a collection for the kids for tips at the end of the week, and the "mother singers" always sang songs to implore the campers to be generous with the tips for the kids.

LaBerge: So this would go on--you'd have maybe a camper night one night, and then the staff would put a show on--

Tuck: Oh, yes, they always put the show on.

LaBerge: I take it after that first year, you met a lot of friends, and it was a big hit with your family.

Tuck: Oh, yes. For years, the Umphreds, the Chickerings of course, the Blues, the Kragens, the Masseys, and the Smiths.

LaBerge: And they all came your same week?

Tuck: Yes, they all would come the same time.

LaBerge: And you hadn't known any of these people before?

Tuck: No.

Changes Through the Years

LaBerge: Isn't that amazing? So what improvements did you see as the years went on?

Tuck: Well, I guess the first one was better bathrooms. That's the most notable one. Then the heated pool, and more tennis courts, and better mattresses. But other than that, improving the lodge and the dining hall, it still carries the same flavor--I was there last summer for a week with Loretta [Tuck Monaco] and Albert, and it's still the same old Lair. [laughs]

LaBerge: Did you continue having just one tent for your whole family?

Eddie's Place and the Golf Course

Tuck: Oh, no! But they did make bigger tents up above there, and we had Eddie's Place. That was the Umphreds'. He was in the furniture business. He always used to bring a truck up, and he'd bring tables and bureaus and chairs. Usually, we'd gather there, because he had the furniture. And he'd put tables on top of stumps and things like that. We'd gather at Eddie's Place for cocktail hour most of the time.

The whole group--Pete Newell was one of them--all got together and got this big neon sign that said "Eddie's Place," and hung it between two trees one night before they got up there. They had signs all the way along the highway, "Eddie's Place, Come to Eddie's Place." And when Eddie arrived and saw this big

neon sign up by his tent, I thought he was going to cry!
[laughter]

How did we decide who was Jeeves? Jeeves, they took turn being Jeeves and serving the drinks.

LaBerge: Oh, I see, from the [P. G.] Wodehouse books?

Tuck: Yes. And then one time, usually--the Martini Athletic Club was another group that came a different week. That was Bill Milliken's week.

LaBerge: And your group had a name too, is that right?

Tuck: Eddie's Place.

LaBerge: That was the name of your group, okay.

Tuck: Yes. Or the Lair Conditioning Society.

And one week, by some odd chance, both the Martini Athletic Club and Eddie's Place were there the same week. So they, oh, had all sorts of rivalries going on. Eddie's Place had built--no, the Martini Athletic Club had built a huge pyramid of beer cans. [laughs] Their symbol was an axe. I don't know how the bet came about, but my dear husband bet that he could knock the top can off with a slingshot without knocking the whole thing down. They bet the Eddie's Place sign against the Martini Athletic Club's axe.

So it was a great ceremony: everybody gathered around, and he got the slingshot out, and he takes aim, and by golly, he did it. He knocked the top can off and the rest of it stayed there. That was only one incident. Gosh, there were so many to remember, you couldn't--

LaBerge: So did he win the axe?

Tuck: Yes, we got the axe. And then of course, they were all saying, "We got the axe, we got the axe." [laughs]

LaBerge: Oh, that's wonderful. What else--I guess that I heard that your husband also built a little golf course?

Tuck: Oh, yes. We had the golf--that was at Camp Blue. Yes, that was when the girls were teenagers. It was a lure for the staff boys to come over and play the little golf course. [laughter] The greens were sand; the kids got sand out of the creek, and the holes were tin cans sunk in the sand. Then we'd hit--there were

little greens about the size of the table that were all sand, and they'd hit across the creek, and then they'd have a landing place over here. It was fun, it really was.

LaBerge: Oh, that's great. And the idea that it was a lure for the staff I think is wonderful. Well, by that time, did they have a teen program or a teen lodge?

Tuck: Oh, yes. Let's see, when was the Teen Lodge built? I can't remember.

LaBerge: I don't know what year. Well, did you have anything to do with expanding the program for the kids?

Tuck: No.

LaBerge: Or any input? Did you give suggestions to Mike or anything like that?

Tuck: Oh, no.

LaBerge: It was just obvious that something needed to be done, probably.

Tuck: Oh, well, yes, like the swimming pool heater and the washing machines, and things like that, yes. My son Hughie [Hugh Tuck]--I guess they only had one washing machine to start with; that's why it was always busy--he went to San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly [California Polytechnic Institute], so he wasn't really eligible to work at the Lair. So he bought a bunch of washing machines and installed them in there, and got the take from them, so that he was up there keeping track of his washing machines for a couple of summers when he was in college.

But I think all the rest of the kids worked there at one time or another. Bobby and Lisa [Tuck] managed the camp two years, I guess.

LaBerge: Did they meet at the Lair, or had they met before? Was that one of the Lair romances?

Tuck: Yes, I guess it was. No, they must have met--oh, I don't know. I'm trying to think back there now. There were a lot of Lair romances. Mike and Janie were the first. [laughter]

LaBerge: That's right, I heard that story. I guess Bob Albo, too, met his wife--

Tuck: Marge [Stanley]. Cab [Kathleen Tuck Rogers] and Gary [Rogers] were up at Tacky, was where they got together. Because we used to go up there in the winter sometimes.

LaBerge: What were some of the other activities that your kids enjoyed, besides the pool? Did they go fishing?

The Fishing Hole and the Kitchen

Tuck: Oh, of course, the fishing hole. They don't have that any more, but the [U.S.] Forest Service wasn't as picky at that time. That's one thing I was asking the kids about, and especially Geoffrey [Smith], because he was older: what he remembers about Mike, and Bobby said this too, that he ran a very tight ship in the camp. That some of the kids were a little afraid of him, and respected him. Cabbage said you wouldn't dare come into the dining room with a dirty apron when you were working in dining hall. When he told you to do something, you did it, no questions asked.

And he also maintained excellent relations with the Forest Service and the sheriff's department, so that they never had any troubles in that regard. The Forest Service was very lenient as far as them expanding things, and making improvements, which was very important. They're not as lenient any more, by a long shot.

LaBerge: Right. And the fishing hole leaving was part of that, wasn't it? The Forest Service made--

Tuck: Oh, yes. They made them take the dam out. Yes, that was another of my husband's better ideas: to get the fish from a hatchery and bring them up on Mondays. Oh, and the scene at that fishing hole with all these little bitty kids holding a fishing rod for the first time, and actually catching a fish! Oh. That was a wonderful program.

LaBerge: And then they'd be cooked for dinner, for breakfast, or whatever.

Tuck: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Do you want to say something about the cooks, particularly Joe Jackson?

Tuck: Joe Jackson of course, yes, and Mrs. Davis. And Joanie--well, Joe and Joanie went up to Tacky then afterwards.

LaBerge: Is Joanie, Joe's wife?

Tuck: No, she was an assistant cook. And Mrs. Davis was the salad queen. But Joe Jackson was an institution. I can see him now out cooking the barbecue on the bedsprings out in back of the dining hall.

LaBerge: Has the food changed over the years?

Tuck: Oh, yes. They used to serve hot lunches all the time, which went over like an iron balloon with the little kids. They wanted their peanut butter and jelly. [laughs] I always thought the food was very good, for camp food, it's excellent. You know, you're not expecting "Stars" or gourmet cuisine, but it's excellent camp food.

But he used to bake the hot breads and--well, he was in charge. And I never saw him upset. He always had a smile on his face. I don't know what went on in the kitchen, but with the campers, he was always so happy and friendly.

LaBerge: Were you there during the week when the kitchen burned?

Tuck: No, we were there after it had burned. They had a song about it: "Gone is the dining room," to the tune of "Gone are the days," ending with "poor old Joe." Where were we eating then? Up at the what's-their-names, the Twinings, their son used to deliver the papers. It was sort of a resort up the hill towards--you'd have to look in the archives for that too, yes.

The Hikes

LaBerge: What about the hikes? Did the kids do that?

Tuck: Oh, the hikes were great. The day expeditions. They'd carpool everybody, and they went to the "Moaning Cave," and they went to the saw mill, and they went to Columbia. That was a bad trip. [laughs] That winding road, and the kids would almost always get sick on the way.

LaBerge: Oh, I bet. And just the staff would take them, not the parents?

Tuck: Well, they'd have a couple of staffers to lead the group, and then the parents carpooled and went along with them.

LaBerge: Did you do some of those hikes yourself?

Tuck: Oh, yes. And the all-day hikes. The one memorable one was up to Leavitt Peak, I think it was, up on the top of the pass, Sonora Pass. When we were coming home; one of those mountain cloudbursts happened, and the heavens opened and rain came down in torrents! Just torrents. I've never seen it rain so hard.

We got down to one place where a creek had gone under the road, and it was going across the road and had washed out a big chunk of roadway, and we couldn't get across. There we were.

They had a bulldozer working on it, trying to shovel enough gravel and stuff in there so we could get across. It was late in the afternoon, it was beginning to get dark, and so we went back to--was it Kennedy Meadows, or Leland Meadows, or whatever--there was a camp up there fairly near the summit. Is it Kennedy Meadows?

LaBerge: It could be. That sounds familiar, that name does.

Tuck: I'd have to look on a map and make sure. So we went back there, and went in the lodge and were warm and cozy. They had a jukebox, and we were dancing, and had a couple of cocktails.

Meanwhile, back at the Lair they were so worried about the all-day hike, and it was getting dark. They got trucks and blankets and coffee and everything, and came up to rescue us from wherever we were stranded. And here we were up there, dancing and having a wonderful time. [laughter]

LaBerge: Oh, my gosh! So they found you up in this nice--

Tuck: Yes, by that time they could get across the creek, and we could get across the creek. So that was quite a day.

LaBerge: This was the adult all-day hike, no kids?

Tuck: Yes, no kids. But those hikes were great. They went to so many beautiful places. You'd hardly ever see anybody else on the trails at that time. You didn't have river rafters on the Stanislaus [River] either, and that was before they built Melones Dam up there. I remember when it was finished, and we went up to look at it. We stood at the top of the dam. Janet Umphred just got this irresistible feeling and kicked her shoe off into the lake.

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LaBerge: So she kicked her shoe off, and then came home the rest of the way with one shoe?

Tuck: One shoe! [laughter]

The group of men would go fishing to various spots, like Spring Gap or the dam there, or up to Bell Meadows, and Mike almost always went along on those expeditions, which were day-long. Joe Smith, and Eddie Umphred, and Bud Blue. Bud Blue was a dedicated fisherman.

LaBerge: Would they spend the night too, or just--

Tuck: No, they'd come back for dinner. There were plenty of good fishing spots around there.

LaBerge: People don't do that so much anymore, I don't think.

Tuck: No, they stay right in camp now. They have golf games. There weren't any golf courses then.

LaBerge: What did you do mostly? You did the hikes, and did you play tennis?

Tuck: Tennis, oh, yes. Tennis and swimming. We even had aquacades a couple of times.

LaBerge: Put on by the campers?

Tuck: Yes. Not very good ones, but it was fun. Everybody got a chance. And I remember, I think the first person I met, the first day we got there I went to the pool, and it was late in the afternoon. I guess the little ones were napping. I kind of sat down to see what was going on, and who did I sit down beside but Boopie Rickson. She leans over, "I'm Boopie Rickson, what's your name?" And we got acquainted immediately. They were just young kids then, Rupe and John.

LaBerge: That's right--I guess I've read their names, Rupe and John. Did they come in--were they on the staff, or were they little kids then?

Tuck: I think they were campers then. Not little kids; they were pretty big kids. And Kenny Kragen was on the staff, and Buzz Knight, and who was the other--Buzz and Rick used to put on a ballet at the campfire show and the staff show.

LaBerge: This is Rick Cronk?

Tuck: Yes.

LaBerge: Was it different for you to go up there when your children were on the staff?

Tuck: No.

LaBerge: No? It didn't bother them?

Tuck: No.

Move to Camp Blue

LaBerge: Why don't you tell me about moving to Camp Blue? Mike's told me a little bit about expanding, and that he asked some of the old pioneers to establish a tradition.

Tuck: To go to get it started. Yes, well, you know they had a big search for another campsite. They went all over. I remember they went down south, and of course the one at Shasta had not been successful.

LaBerge: Did you go to the Shasta camp?

Tuck: No. But then they finally were able to make a trade and get the--I don't know the ins and outs of that deal, get the space for the other camp there. Then, of course, everybody wanted to stay at Gold, and nobody wanted to move. So the Blues were instrumental, and then of course, they always said that the Blue Camp was named after the Blues. [laughter]

LaBerge: Did you have to talk your children into this, into moving?

Tuck: Oh, yes. Because they wanted to be where the baseball field was. That was the big attraction at Gold. But they got used to it.

LaBerge: How many families besides the Blues and you moved over that summer?

Tuck: Oh, gee, I don't remember. The Merediths were there, and I think the Joe Smiths moved over there. I'd have to go to the bottom of the bureau drawer and find the list.

LaBerge: After that first year at Blue, what did you do? Did you keep going back to Blue?

Tuck: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Because you liked it well enough?

Tuck: Yes, and the tents were brand new, and everything was brand new, a little bit cleaner than the old place. Lair dirt. The main path going from the top of the hill down to the dining hall at Gold, we called "Rue de la Dirt." [laughter]

LaBerge: It sounds like your family had a lot to do with the Lair humor. Because don't you think there's a special sense of humor there that isn't anyplace else?

Tuck: Yes, yes. And then very much against regulations at Camp Blue at night, after dinner, somehow or other, after the campfire show, everybody would kind of get together and sing. We'd scoop a big hole and have a little tiny campfire in the middle of it. And who had the guitar, I forget? And we'd sing very softly, but sing.

LaBerge: Did anyone come and complain?

Tuck: No. If they came over to see what was going on, they'd join the group. I guess we were bad campers. And of course, it was always a problem getting people to come down to dinner on time. That was one of the songs that said something about "the second bell's rung, and Mike's exploded." [laughter]

LaBerge: That first year that you came, how did you know what to pack for the camp and for all your children and--?

Tuck: Well, we had a place down in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and I figured it would be the same kind of clothes and equipment you'd want down there. Of course, I had to bring a little electric hot-plate to warm a bottle for--yes, the first year, Bobby wasn't born yet. George was the baby. I know one year I left the two youngest ones home with Alice.

LaBerge: I was going to ask you if you brought real tiny babies up.

Tuck: Well, not tiny, but--

LaBerge: Little babies.

Tuck: Right. Yes. And it was not too inconvenient. Later on, up at Camp Blue, I'd bring practically a whole kitchen with me and cook hamburgers at lunch.

LaBerge: Because the food wasn't--

Tuck: They didn't like the lunches.

LaBerge: And there wasn't the Burger Shack?

Tuck: Oh, no, they didn't have burgers at night. That was a much later development.

LaBerge: How about other activities, like bridge or chess or--?

Tuck: Oh, yes, bridge. There was a lot of bridge. I was surprised this last summer, hardly anybody signed up for bridge at Blue. They were mostly in other activities. Big tennis group. But there were always tournaments to sign up for.

LaBerge: From the very beginning?

Tuck: Oh, yes. And tennis was always big. And they used to take the kids over to the lake, boating. And lunch hikes for the little ones, and pretty good long hikes for the older kids, too.

LaBerge: To Cleo's?

Tuck: Yes.

LaBerge: Well, this must have been one of your best vacations.

Tuck: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: Because there aren't many places you can go with--

Tuck: With that many kids.

LaBerge: With the kids, and relax yourself.

Tuck: Oh, yes, because you know, I wouldn't see them from one end of the day until dinnertime, and we wouldn't even sit at the same tables. They'd be with their friends. Bob [Tuck] and Adrian Kragen, at breakfast they'd always pick a table with a whole bunch of little kids when there was melon, because the kids wouldn't ever eat the melon, and they liked melon. [laughter]

LaBerge: That's a good idea.

Tuck: Oh, yes, they all had their various activities. The little ones would be in the Kub Korral in the morning, and then they'd nap in the afternoon. And they just loved that Kub Korral, couldn't wait to get there. And the girls that worked in it, of course. Oh, that was something, that first year. Jonny Smith, that's Geoffrey's brother, my nephew, I guess he was about six years old maybe. He just idolized Janie, and followed her around like a shadow. Whenever poor Janie turned around, there was Jonathan

right behind her. He wanted to marry her when he grew up. She was so sweet with the kids, and always--I don't know how she did it--she always looked neat as a pin and clean, in all that dirt.

LaBerge: I'm always amazed, because a lot of the staff do look neat as a pin, and they've got white shirts on, and they don't have mud on them like the rest of us. [laughter]

Tuck: Have you been up there much?

LaBerge: We've been going now for ten years. The way we heard about it was from Cab, because we would see them go off every year to the Lair. Neither of us are California natives, so we didn't know about the Lair, and by the time our youngest was three, I remember calling her to ask about it. She gave me her Lair list. Otherwise, I wouldn't have known what to bring--all those little extras, clothespins--

Tuck: Yes, and rope--

LaBerge: --flashlights--

Tuck: --hammer and nails, flashlights, yes. Washbasin.

LaBerge: Little buckets for the kids to go to the bathroom with.

Tuck: Yes, and the first year, of course every tent always had a fire pail, a pail full of water. We had a system, first you washed your face, then you brushed your teeth, and then you put your dirty socks in to soak until morning. [laughter]

Rainy Days

LaBerge: What about rainy days? Thinking of wet socks.

Tuck: Oh, that was murder. One year we had about three days in a row when it rained, and every kid in camp was just soaked all the way through--the shoes and the socks. You couldn't get anything dry. They kept a great huge fire going in the lodge, and we'd try and get them dried out, and they'd have movies and games in the dining room. But a lot of people went home. You get to the point where you're soaked through, and that's it.

LaBerge: But you didn't go home?

Tuck: No. [laughs] No, I remember we were sitting inside the tent, just before lunch, and I had my little electric stove. We made hot toddies for the grown-ups to kind of get us warmed up. Oh, Garff Wilson was there that week. His tent was up the hill above ours, and he came down the path and we said, "Come on, Garff, come in." So he came right in, and we sat and had a couple of toddies. When the lunch bell rang, he went out and he was doing a spring dance down the path to the dining room. [laughter]

LaBerge: Was he up there to be one of the speakers, or did he come--?

Tuck: Usually. A couple of times, he was the speaker, or did a reading or something like that. But he liked it too, and he used to come just for the friendship.

Speakers and Doctors

LaBerge: Who were some of the other speakers, a couple that you remember the best?

Tuck: Glenn Seaborg, of course. He was one of the early ones. And that, to me, was just something that you couldn't get anywhere else, to think that my kids could sit under a tree and talk to a Nobel Prize winner. And he was just great with the kids, with answering their questions and everything. That's something that is really special, that you couldn't get anywhere else. And Wendell Stanley, another Nobel Prize winner.

LaBerge: Would they give separate talks for the kids and the adults?

Tuck: If the kids wanted to talk to them and question them, they were just great. Very patient. Oh, and Doug Kelley, a psychiatrist. Did you know him?

LaBerge: No, I didn't. And the camp doctors, did you have regulars who came back year after year?

Tuck: Bob Albo.

LaBerge: After he was manager.

Tuck: And I'm trying to think--names escape me at times, and they are such good friends, too. But it will come back in a moment. Bud Murray. John Najarian. Yes. I'm trying to think of other outstanding speakers. Those are outstanding ones. But over the

years, there have been so many, you don't really remember them too well unless they were outstanding.

I remember the one who gave the talk on--I can't remember his name, but he was very good--talking about the deer herd up there, because that interested all of us who are bothered by deer. And the fact that they stay, and they don't roam around. They stay in one area. We weren't bothered by deer there, but it was a very interesting talk.

Also, there was a subject which was never mentioned out loud, and that was rattlesnakes. Because there were rattlesnakes up there. A couple of times, they very quietly conducted rattlesnake hunts, too.

LaBerge: You obviously knew about it.

Tuck: Yes, but not the general campers.

LaBerge: What about bears?

Tuck: Oh, yes. Yes, the bears were around. They'd come into camp every once in a while. I remember when the [Art and June] Gallons were managing up there, and they had the little house up on the hill, and little Tracy, I guess it was, was in the cabin in the afternoon--imagine!--taking a nap, and she heard this noise outside. She opened the tent flaps, and there was a bear right on the porch.

Oh, and they'd get into the garbage occasionally. You'd see them across the creek sometimes. And then one year, I forget what year it was, there was a forest fire right nearby, and they sort of drafted most of the kids on the staff, the fellows, to go out and help fight the forest fire. At that time, some of the older camper kids got to work on the staff to fill in while they were off fighting the fire.

LaBerge: Including some of your kids?

Tuck: King got his first job there. [laughter]

LaBerge: That was probably a thrill. Did your kids always want to be on the staff?

Tuck: Oh, yes, of course. Even if it was garbage detail. In fact, the little kids liked riding on the garbage truck before they were even old enough to work on the staff.

LaBerge: I assume that was one of the attractions for you, is the quality of the staff, that influence on the kids.

Tuck: Oh, yes. They just idolized the kids on the staff, and there have been so many who have gone on to greater things. Well, they've been very selective in choosing the ones that get to work there, because it's three months, all summer. They have to be congenial with the others and have some talents, and be able to handle the general public. Yes, they're outstanding.

Funny Anecdotes: Kidnaping and Ladybugs

LaBerge: How about telling me about when your husband was kidnaped? We didn't get that--

Tuck: Oh, that was for the baseball game. Yes, because he was the coach. Albo was at the head of the conspiracy, and they came running out, and they just bodily picked him up and put him in a pickup truck and drove off with him.

LaBerge: And this was before the game began?

Tuck: Yes, before the game began.

LaBerge: Where did they take him?

Tuck: I don't know, but they brought him back for dinner. [laughter] Oh, and then there was the ladybug day. You know, at times the ladybugs all hatch out at the same time, and they're just all over the place. Bob had brought up--I think he'd brought up squirt guns for the kids that year, and they were squirting each other all over the place. I guess the staff weren't too appreciative of it.

Anyway, he thought to get them distracted a little bit from the squirt guns, he said that down in the valley, they needed ladybugs to eat the aphids in the orchards, because they're very good bugs. So he had all the kids going out and collecting ladybugs. The staff thought that he was going to do something terrible with the ladybugs! [laughter] They didn't know what it was.

So that night, when we were at campfire, the staff collected as many ladybugs as they could, and brought them and put them in our tent. When we came back to the tent, the walls were just covered with ladybugs, all over the whole place. Oh! And we had

to scrape them off the canvas and throw them outside. It was just [laughs]--. They thought there was some plot.

LaBerge: And there wasn't a plot?

Tuck: No, it was just keeping the kids busy.

Qualities Needed in a Manager

LaBerge: You've been there so many years, and you've seen lots of different managers, basically the same director, Mike. What kind of qualities do you think the managers at Camp Gold or Camp Blue need?

Tuck: Well, they have to be able to handle the group of kids with raging hormones. There used to be some incidents at, I guess, Saturday night, Saturday night incidents which we will not repeat! [laughter] Like people jumping off the roof of the bathhouse into the swimming pool, nude swimming parties and things like that. But they are hidden behind a veil of silence. It takes a firm hand to keep them under control, and sometimes I guess the kids resent it, but you have to have somebody that they respect, that they will toe the line for.

And Art Gallon was one of those. Although [laughs] I understand that sometimes--oh, I shouldn't say this--he and Mike would have altercations of a sort.

Oh, Geoff and Bonnie [Smith] managed camp a couple of years too, I think, at Gold, as I recall.

Mike Koll

LaBerge: And as far as Mike goes, what qualities does he have that have really made this a successful--

Tuck: Oh, he's a very good manager. He keeps his finger on everything. And as I said, he maintained very good relations with the Forest Service and the sheriff's office, which enabled him to do a lot of things that might be frowned on today, like adding a tent here and there.

And as I said, the food was always good as far as I was concerned. He kept his eye on everything. But talk about competitive! He was fiercely competitive in tennis and the baseball games, he always had to win! Oh, but those rivalries make it fun; that's part of the camp.

LaBerge: That's right. Did they always have volleyball games too, or is that fairly recent?

Tuck: No, no. The volleyball games went back a long way. In fact, that's how Geoffrey and Jonathan's father broke his ankle the first day he was there, I think, one time. Yes, there have been accidents on the volleyball court.

And I can only remember one lost camper. I guess they've had others over the years, but this old guy just disappeared for a day.

LaBerge: Mike told me about two. One, they never found.

Tuck: Oh, really? I didn't know about that.

LaBerge: There was one who was never found, but another one who was using it as a game.

Tuck: Yes, he had done it before. We were wondering--his wife wasn't overly upset about it.

LaBerge: You mean, that he wasn't back?

Tuck: She kind of thought that he'd turn up safe and sound. Oh, and one lost baby that I can remember, but we found that one within a couple of hours.

LaBerge: Well, that's certainly one of the beauties of the place, is the kids are free--more free than they are at homes, around town--

Tuck: Yes. They can wander all over the camp. Oh, yes. For the five- and six-year-olds, it's just heaven.

LaBerge: Getting back to Mike, how about public relations? And same thing with the managers too, with the campers, handling complaints or handling problems.

Tuck: Oh, there are always problems. Somebody's always going to complain about something, yes. Oh, he always handled problems well. And I imagine there were lots of them that we never knew a thing about.

And of course, in the olden days, I remember some ladies would come up there with their flowered dresses and white shoes, not knowing what to expect, and complained about the dirt.
[laughter] Lair dirt.

Yes, first we came for one week, and then we decided that wasn't enough. Then we'd come for two weeks. And one year we decided maybe we'd stay three weeks, but that was just one week too long. I mean, you never get the ground-in dirt out from three weeks.

LaBerge: If you stay two weeks, you didn't and the kids didn't get bored with the same schedule?

Tuck: No, but three weeks was a little too long.

LaBerge: Even though it was new kids and new people?

Tuck: Yes.

LaBerge: But it is such an ideal vacation for everybody, because there comes a point when the kids don't want to go anywhere with you.

Tuck: Oh, no, they don't want to have anything to do with you, the older teenagers.

LaBerge: That's great. So you continue to go now with one of your children's families?

Tuck: Well, just the last couple of years, since Bob died.

LaBerge: But before that, did the two of you go up by yourselves?

Tuck: Well, we wouldn't stay at the Lair. When the kids were working there, sometimes we'd go up and stay over at Strawberry, and just come and visit and see the show.

LaBerge: Oh, that's a good idea, too.

Tuck: Yes.

Camp at Granlibakken

LaBerge: You started talking, and we didn't have it on tape, about Granlibakken, and that--

Tuck: Oh, yes. Of course, that was a winter ski resort. Rosemary and Larry Lindsay ran that. But Mike built a house right up there, and did that burn down? I know they had a fire--

LaBerge: I think that it did, because he told me he had been through a fire.

Tuck: Yes, they had a fire there.

LaBerge: How did the idea for that Tahoe Alumni Center come about?

Tuck: I really don't know. I think the University owned the property. They had a ski lodge up at the top of the summit there for a couple of years, and then--you'd have to ask somebody in the University who knew how they acquired that property. That was, as I said, a winter resort more than a summer resort. Had the little Granlibakken ski hill there. The Alumni Council used to have a meeting up there once in a while. But I remember going up there in the summer too, I guess it was for a council meeting or something.

[laughs] Jan Erickson started the polar bear club up there, swimming on New Year's Day in the pool.

LaBerge: And I take it the pool was not heated?

Tuck: It was.

LaBerge: It was heated? But it's still pretty cold.

Tuck: It was still cold when you got out!

##

LaBerge: You didn't go much to Granlibakken? Did you already have your own place up there?

Tuck: No, we didn't have our Tahoe place at that time. But that's where Cab and Gary really got together. They were working up there over the Christmas holidays, and they stayed up late New Year's, I guess it was, cleaning up the dining room and everything, and just--that did it. [laughter]

And that year, that was when Gary rescued the little kid off the ski lift. Did you ever hear about that?

LaBerge: No.

Tuck: Oh, yes. A little kid, about eight or nine I guess she was, was on the chair lift and her jacket got caught on it, or she was getting on it, I guess, and her jacket got caught. She was hanging there. The ski lift is going up the hill. Gary was working there at that time and he saw what had happened. They stopped the lift when they saw the kid hanging there, and he went up one of the poles and hand over hand on the cable and grabbed the kid. Yes, the white knight. He was the one--yes.

The Lair's Contribution to the Alumni Association

LaBerge: As far as your association with the University, you've continued to be active. You said you were on the Alumni Council.

Tuck: Yes.

LaBerge: For how many years?

Tuck: Two terms.

LaBerge: And several of your children have been, too?

Tuck: Gail [Tuck Forbes] was on, and I guess Bobby was, too.

LaBerge: In that bigger picture, what do you see as the Lair's contribution, or attachment to the University?

Tuck: Oh, I think it's unique. It builds so much spirit among the younger generation, and support for the University, and financial support. Now I understand--it's been several years since I was on the council, but I know it is a major support of the Alumni Association.

LaBerge: It's their biggest money-maker.

Tuck: I think so, yes. And it fosters a spirit--the campers are like a big family, and have feelings for each other and for the University that I don't think you'd find anyplace else. I know the Stanford Camp is "a camp," but they don't have the same feeling about it there at all. It's more of a summer resort, and not a family place.

Oh, and the Masseys, I forgot the Masseys. They were one of the early ones, too. And of course, the Newells were there.

LaBerge: Did they come up to be--did Pete come up to be a speaker, or did they come up just to be campers?

Tuck: Oh, they were campers.

LaBerge: How about the influence for the kids of wanting to go to the University?

Tuck: Oh, of course. They all wanted to. Only five of them made it. [laughter]

LaBerge: That's pretty good!

Tuck: But they all wanted to go there, yes. It's certainly an incentive. They get their little Lair T-shirts, and they sing the Cal songs, and they're imbued with the spirit of Cal.

LaBerge: Were there any anecdotes that--

Tuck: Are printable? [laughter]

LaBerge: And that you'd want to share?

The Bridge Tournament and Other Stories

Tuck: Well, I told you about the ladybug matter, and the fire, and--[laughs] one of the bridge tournaments--this you can omit if you want, but I'll just tell you--oh, well, everybody remembers it. It was at the end of the bridge tournament, and Bob and Eddie Umphred were playing these real sharp bridge players who were very serious about the whole thing. They had both had cocktail hour before they got around to playing the bridge game. They had quite a few of the group sitting around watching--this was the end of the tournament.

LaBerge: So they had made it to the finals?

Tuck: Yes, they had made it to the finals. The other people were piling up the score against them. Comes to the last hand--they played sixteen hands or twenty, something like that--and they just were so far ahead that it was ridiculous. Eddie Umphred looks at the score, and then he looks over and says, [slowly] "Would you care to concede?" [laughter] Oh, God. There were lots of incidents.

Oh, and they used to have a moonlight horseback ride, too. One night they got back from the moonlight horseback ride, and the gals were all in the bathroom discussing various things.

LaBerge: This is the teens, or adults?

Tuck: Adults. Oh, I don't think they'd take the teens on a moonlight horseback ride. Janie Prescott--she was little, very thin, and not a heavyweight at all--and she was leaning against the washbasin, and somehow or other the washbasin broke off the wall and the water came pouring out. She screamed, she didn't know what had happened. Somebody else yelled "Fire!" and it was one of those Thurber-ish moments when nobody knew exactly what had happened, and everybody started coming out of their tents to see. And it was nothing, really. [laughs]

Of course, my family are all Catholics, and there were several others, too, and, of course, we couldn't eat meat on Fridays. They didn't like the Friday dinners. So we'd all wait until midnight and go down to Cold Springs--the resort that burned that's not there any more, right up the hill from the Lair anyway--and get hamburgers there.

LaBerge: What did they serve? Did they serve fish on Fridays, or not?

Tuck: Yes, mostly tuna delight or something like that.

And one time, Adrian went along with us, and he rode in the luggage carrier on top of the station wagon! [laughter]

LaBerge: We have an oral history¹ with him. I don't know if he--about his whole career and everything, and he does mention the Lair a little bit.

Tuck: Lots of memories.

LaBerge: Do you want to end there, if you don't have another anecdote to talk about?

Tuck: Yes. Can't think of them all at once.

¹Adrian A. Kragen, A Law Professor's Career: Teaching, Private Practice, and Legislative Representative, 1934 to 1989, University of California at Berkeley, The Regional Oral History Office, 1991.

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University History Series

FIRST CAMP GOLD MANAGER, 1957-1958:
AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT ALBO, M.D.

An Interview Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1993

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Robert James Albo
Date of birth May 8 1932 Birthplace Oakland, Ca
Father's full name John Albo (deceased)
Occupation Machinist Birthplace Montana
Mother's full name Yolanda Dezotte Albo (deceased)
Occupation Secretary Birthplace Oakland, Ca
Your spouse Marjorie Stanley Albo
Occupation Domestic Engineer Birthplace New Jersey
Your children Robert W. Albo, Deborah L. Albo (Jacobs)
Douglas J. Albo
Where did you grow up? Berkeley
Present community Redmont
Education Berkeley High School, UC Berkeley, U.C. S.F. Med Center
Occupation(s) Doctor, Surgeon
Areas of expertise Cancer, gastro intestinal surgery
Chief of Surgery, UC Berkeley Student Health
Service, Team Physician Golden State Warriors, consulting
Surgeon L.A.
Other interests or activities Magic, Sports Medicine, skiing, Raider
golf, tennis
Organizations in which you are active See CV.

IX FIRST CAMP GOLD MANAGER, 1957-1958: AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT ALBO, M.D.

[Interview 12: February 25, 1993] ##

Undergraduate Days at Berkeley

- LaBerge: Since our interview is going to focus on the University, why don't you tell me about your first experience with the University?
- Albo: Well, I started at the University of California [at Berkeley] in September of 1951 at the age of eighteen. I had at that point in my life been visiting the University campus since I was about eight years old. I had gone up and watched the football, basketball, and baseball games, track meets, and everything else about the University, so it had always been a part of my life. I intended to get my education at the University.
- LaBerge: Did you grow up in Berkeley?
- Albo: Grew up in Berkeley, went to Berkeley High School, went to Franklin Grammar School and Burbank Junior High School, and then on to the University of California. I graduated from the University of California in 1954, got my B.S. [bachelor of science] in 1955 and my M.D. [doctor of medicine] in 1959.
- LaBerge: From UCSF [University of California at San Francisco]?
- Albo: UCSF. But of course, in those days, we graduated on the U.C. campus. We were the last class to do so, and in those days you started at the U.C. Berkeley Life Sciences Building, which I did in 1955, a class of seventy-three students, very small class. The University at that time was \$37.50 per semester, undergraduate. Medical school was \$180 per semester, unbelievable.

I lived at home, because I didn't have any money and my family didn't have any money, so I was able to go to Cal only on the basis of its very small tuition and the fact that the University gave me a job. I swept out the student union every morning from about 7:00 until about 8:30 in the morning. I would sweep out the old student union; had to punch a time clock.

The man who was my supervisor and boss in those days was Eli Wilson, who's still one of my very good friends. I did that for four years, five days a week during the school semester. It paid me a buck and a quarter an hour, which was enough for me to go and do everything that I wanted to do in life.

Then, by working during the summer, I could save enough money to go to school and have no financial problems at all.

Athletics at Cal

LaBerge: Weren't you also an athlete?

Albo: Yes, I played basketball and baseball, was the captain of both teams, and received the Gimbel Award for outstanding student athlete.

LaBerge: Who was your basketball coach?

Albo: Nibbs Price. Clint Evans was my baseball coach.

LaBerge: One of our interviewers hopefully is going to interview Pete Newell.

Albo: Oh, Pete Newell, I was his first freshman basketball team coach at Cal. He taught me a lot about coaching. That basketball team went undefeated.

LaBerge: So this was when you were in medical school, you came back--

Albo: That was my first year in medical school. My team went undefeated, and the fellows that were on my team eventually played on the team that won his first NCAA [National Collegiate Athletic Association] championship.

LaBerge: Would you have any--just a short insight into either him or Nibbs Price?

Albo: Oh, yes. I knew both Pete and Nibbs very, very well.

LaBerge: Did they have similar coaching strategies?

Albo: No, totally different. Nibbs' teaching was what I would call the old school. He taught you--[interruption]--the basics of basketball and the accepted and standard offenses and defenses of the time. I think although he had a system to his coaching and plays, they were basically the standard for that period of time. Pete Newell set the standard for not just the University of California, but for all coaches. Bobby Knight is his disciple, and nearly every coach in professional basketball thinks that Pete Newell set the standard for what coaching really is, and I think he has. He taught me an immense amount about how to set up plays, how to condition the athletes, how to teach footwork, how to teach individual skills so that the person could be at his best as far as a performing athlete. So Pete Newell taught me a great deal, but he was on the real new horizons. He was a true leader. So there's a huge difference between the two.

Basically, I turned down an opportunity to play professional baseball, and went to medical school, which was never a bad decision. But I met Mike Koll between my senior year in college and my one year of graduate work before I got my B.S.

LaBerge: So it's 1954?

Albo: That would be 1954, it was the summer of 1954. I had gone back East and had been offered a professional baseball contract, and I spoke to several people at the University, and they said, "Well, what do you want to be, an athlete or a doctor?" I said, "I want to be a doctor." And they all told me, "Well, then you'd better go back to school and get into medical school and not fiddle around with trying to be an athlete."

Call from Mike Koll. 1954

Albo: So I came back to the University, and Mike Koll called me and asked me if I would like to work at the Lair of the Bear that summer.

LaBerge: Had you ever heard of the Lair before?

Albo: I had gone there once with my two good friends, Rupe and John Ricksen, who had worked at the Lair of the Bear, and they had brought me up for a weekend on one occasion. So I knew a little bit about it, but it was sort of a vague thing in my memory even then. So I didn't really--I knew that I would like it, because

they were all young kids and everything was wonderful, but I had no idea how much I would like it. Because I was going to go back to school, made up my mind to do that and go to medical school, I decided that this was certainly the best offer that I could get, and have some fun and yet be able to make a little bit of money.

So off I went to the Lair of the Bear, really unknowing to what I was getting into.

LaBerge: Now, this was regular staff. You weren't the manager yet?

Albo: No, I wasn't the manager yet. I went as the athletic director. First year, I went as the athletic director.

LaBerge: Did Mike know your name because you were an athlete?

Albo: Correct.

LaBerge: But you'd never met him before.

Albo: No, I'd never met him before. He knew I played baseball because he was a great baseball player at Cal. He had watched some of our games, and I guess he knew me from reputation. I had been a good student and had participated. Everybody knew me around the University. Having been a two-sport athlete, it was only natural that Mike would know who I was.

I didn't know much about Mike, except that I had read his name, and I knew he was a great baseball player at Cal in the past. I had no idea how great he was until I had an opportunity to review all those records after I had gone to the Lair and after I had gotten to know Mike pretty well. He was truly a wonderful baseball player, and a tremendously competitive athlete which, when I read back all of the records and everything on what Mike had accomplished, explained to me why he was such a fierce competitor. It also explained to me why the Lair finally succeeded, because it took somebody of Mike's competitiveness and drive and energy to make that place succeed. It would never have succeeded had it not had someone like Mike Koll directing it.

LaBerge: What qualities do you think a Lair director needs?

Albo: Well, that's very interesting.

LaBerge: Or to get it started; I guess that's different than what Ray [Bosch] has to do now.

Albo: Yes. Well, you know, in my first year I was the athletic director, and I just had so much fun it was wonderful. So the

next year I was the program director. Then the third year, I became not only the program director but the director, the manager of the whole Lair.

LaBerge: So you did those two jobs in conjunction?

Albo: Yes.

LaBerge: Because that doesn't happen any more.

Albo: No. And then actually that year, the program director was Terry Cole, who would eventually become the camp director. The athletic director was Mike White. So I did the program director and the director of the Lair, and then after that, all I was was the manager. Then I didn't any longer function as program [director].

I went up once as the doctor at Lair of the Bear in Gold Camp, and it was while I was manager of Camp Gold that we built Camp Blue. It was during my managerial years--of course, Mike was the man who built it, but I was the manager of Camp Gold during those days, and Mike spent most of his time over at Camp Blue building the camp. And then of course, he was the first director of Camp Blue while I was the director of Camp Gold.

LaBerge: So this was 1957?

Meeting Marge Stanley

Albo: I would say it was--well, I started at the Lair of the Bear in 1954, and I was at the Lair of the Bear '54, '55, '56, and I think Camp Blue started in '57, if I'm not mistaken. Then '58, and then '59 I was still manager, and then in '60 I was the camp doctor. All three of my children were born while I was at the Lair, and my wife, I met my wife up there.

LaBerge: Okay, let's hear that story.

Albo: Well, this is very interesting. My wife went to Berkeley High School like I did. In fact, she sat behind me in many classes. Being an "A", I was in the front of the room, and she was a Stanley, so she was usually further along in the alphabet, but she would sit--but in many classes, she ended up sitting behind me. I never knew her. Never knew who she was, never knew she existed. Went all through college, and I never met her.

Then I met her as she was one of the waitresses in the camp cafeteria there, mess hall girls, and I was the athletic director. That's when I met her. We went together for two years, and then we got married.

LaBerge: Her name?

Albo: Her name is Marjorie Stanley. Her dad [Wendell Stanley] was a Nobel Laureate at U.C. Berkeley, and Stanley Hall is named after him at U.C. Berkeley. He was a great man. He was just great to me, he was just a wonderful man.

So in any event, I met my wife up there, [and my future wife] and I, like many others before us, ended up working together up there, and ended up getting together. Mike obviously met Jane up there.

LaBerge: Right. We've heard that story.

Competitive Spirit in Baseball and Volleyball

Albo: So that was really amazing, too. Jane and I and Mike and I hit it off immediately, so we have been good friends ever since. I suspect that I understand Mike a lot better than most people. I was as competitive in those days as he was. I couldn't stand to lose. I have mellowed, and I don't--I'm not quite as bad a loser as I was then, but I'm still a pretty bad loser. I don't like losing. But I'm not nearly as competitive as I was then.

But Mike has always been and will always be a very competitive man. He performs at the highest level that he can possibly perform, no matter what he's doing. He does it the best possible way he can do it, which has always been a great thing for me to follow. I have always felt strongly about that: that in everything you do, if you're going to take the time to do it, do it the best you can do it. If you're not going to take the time to do it the best you can do it, then don't take the time to do it at all.

So with that, I met Mike, and Mike was the director obviously, and I was his athletic director. I watched Mike. He used to play in the baseball games in those days, and the volleyball games. Mike and I for example used to be the traveling volleyball team. We would go around the whole Pinecrest area, and all of Sonora and everywhere else, and we'd play two men against their six best men, and we'd beat everybody.

Nobody could beat us. That showed how competitive we were. We'd kill them; we just absolutely killed, annihilated everybody.

LaBerge: He told about going to Twain Harte.

Albo: That's right, and playing their best team in Rotary and beating them. But we used to do that all the time. We were very competitive. And in baseball, we had a great baseball team. We'd take on anybody. The Lair was a really good baseball team.

In those days, Mike had just--I think he played one year when I was there, but after that, he gave up playing baseball. He just wasn't going to play baseball any more. That was a smart move. I later did the same thing; I just pulled myself out of the lineup and became a manager, and tried to stay indifferent about the baseball game, because it became very competitive. Then eventually, when Blue used to play Gold, then it became very competitive, too, because the camps would play each other and not the directors, which was much better.

But Mike was very special. He would frequently put me in charge in those early days when he had other things to do, particularly when he was building the other camp and everything.

The County Assessor

Albo: And of course, the story he loves to tell is the story about the time that a man came to visit the place. Mike had told him to come and visit the Lair. He came and introduced himself, and didn't tell me what he did, but he said, "Mr. Koll said that you would take care of me." I said, "Yes, sir. What are we supposed to do?"

He said, "You're supposed to show me what the facilities are." So I mistakenly thought that this was some sort of a big man who was going to get many people to come to the Lair--not that we needed many people to come to the Lair, because the place was full anyway--so I really sold it high class. I took him around, and I absolutely painted everything with a rosy red picture, so that everything looked like it was made like nothing else in the world.

Well, it turns out he was the county tax assessor, and so [laughs]--

LaBerge: Mike has told this story, but it's good to get it from you, yes.

Albo: [laughing] It turns out that I think they doubled his taxes, or pretty close to tripled them. Mike couldn't believe it. And when he went over the records of all the things that this guy was taxing--we had outhouses that we hadn't used in five years that this guy was taxing; it was really funny.

Mike came to me, he was in hysterics. He really thought it was funny. You have to understand Mike, because he realized that I'd done a selling job on the guy. But it was just--he thought it was hysterical. I had really sold the place well. So by the time the guy got back, he thought he was at a palace, not the Lair of the Bear, which was far from being a palace in those days.

So anyway, Mike was wonderful in that respect. Mike also taught me a lot about how to deal with people. I was pretty good in dealing with people, but Mike understood people, probably better than anyone I ever knew. He wasn't always perhaps as congenial as he could be. Sometimes he could be pretty harsh. And I think he'd be the first person to admit that. But, he knew how to deal with people, and he had a way of taking people and making them feel like they were very important. Mike taught that to me.

Public Relations

Albo: I was very good with names, but I couldn't remember every name. Mike was wonderful with names. So he never addressed anybody in any way other than by their name. Mike showed me how important that was, so I took from Mike that same creed, and I would memorize every name of every person that was coming to camp, so that--

LaBerge: Beforehand?

Albo: Beforehand, so that when they came and they introduced themselves to me, I knew them by name from then on. I knew their children by name. By the end of the week, I knew everybody in camp by their first name, and I had gotten that from Mike. Mike was terrific about that. He was unbelievable when it came to names.

So that carried me--I had always been pretty affable anyway, but that was something I learned from Mike Koll, and you talk to anyone, they'll tell you, he just never forgot a name. I got to the point where I was as good at that as Mike was, so that everybody knew when they came in, and when they came the next

year, I'd call them by name when they drove up. "Jeez, it's good to have you back." That was something that Mike taught to me that was really important.

LaBerge: It's probably stood you in good stead in your practice.

Albo: Yes, it did. It taught me many lessons, as far as medicine and my whole life and the professors that I met up there at the Cal Alumni Camp, and the people--many of whom were going to be my professors when I went to medical school. All these people became my friends. They were really good friends. And boy, I just have to give Mike a lot of credit for that. He showed me how to deal with those people, and how to make them a part of the thing, not just be, "Here, here's the camp, now do with it what you want." You became a part of it.

I suspect--I had a way with children which probably I don't think anyone had.

LaBerge: People have said that about you. I think Noel Helmbrecht said that, and Ann Flinn did too.

Albo: I had a way with children. So of course, the way to a family's heart was through their children.

LaBerge: That's for sure.

Albo: And I knew every kid. I could call him by name, and that was-- Mike taught me that. Now, he didn't always know the kids by name. He knew the parents, but I knew the kids. And by the end of the week, they were traipsing around behind me, I knew every one of them by name. Every one of them. And they were my friends, and the families--those kids grew up, I would say 90 percent of those people became my patients later. They would all come to me, and, "You don't remember me, but I was at the Lair." And those people, that was really very rewarding. That was the wonderful thing about the Lair.

And it became a part of my life, but Mike Koll and the Lair were really a part of my life. They showed me how to live and be comfortable with yourself and with other people. It was really amazing.

LaBerge: Do you think the sense of humor has something to do with it?

Albo: [laughs]

LaBerge: Because it was unique.

Albo: I don't know. I think the Lair is casual, but can be very serious too. I think both elements are there, and I think the Lair gives a great insight to people. You really know what a person's like when you're up there. And then Mike White and I took down the Lair every year. Mike [Koll] would pay us a certain stipend for taking down all the camps, all the electricity, everything that was up there. Mike White and I did it for years and years, and then when I went on to medical school and after medical school, Mike used to get other people to help him. Mike kept doing it even when he was the coach for [the University of] Illinois, the coach for the 49ers, he still used to take down camp.

So that was wonderful. Mike White was one of my first employees up there.

LaBerge: But he was your athletic director?

Albo: He was my athletic director. Terry Cole was my program director. It was a group; boy, that was a group. Those guys were my athletic director and program director for, oh, several years. Many years.

LaBerge: Do you have any anecdotes about either of them, or--

Albo: Oh, I've got a lot of anecdotes about them. But I'd rather stick with Mike [Koll].

Mike used to play baseball, and he was extremely competitive. For example, he would slide into bases. I mean, here this was this field that just--you could barely run on it, let alone slide. He'd scrape up his hip, wouldn't bother him in the slightest. Because he wanted to win.

And he played volleyball. He played volleyball with us, and he was terrifically competitive in volleyball. He loved to be competitive out there. And of course, tennis was his game. So we would all play Mike, and we could none of us beat him. I used to teach tennis, and I wasn't a great tennis player by any stretch of the imagination, but I could never beat Mike.

It wasn't that he was that great a tennis player, but he would just will it. He was such a competitor. He would go after everything. He would make shots that were unbelievable, because he just didn't know how to lose. He was just a great competitor.

Fishing and Hunting Trips

Albo: And he fished the same way. We went on many, many fishing trips, Mike Koll and Jane Koll and I, and Mike White and all that group, and we would go on numerous fishing trips, oh, my goodness. Every year, just marvelous fishing trips, usually overnights. They were always so much fun, gosh sakes alive.

He was the greatest teacher. Mike Koll was a wonderful teacher when you went fishing. Take you out, bait your line, show you how to cast it. I will never forget, one time we were going to go fishing, and Mike said, "Now, look. These fish will bite on a specific type of fly. Now here's--" and he'd give me one of his poles and he'd put the special fly on there, and then he'd say, "Now, here's the way you cast it. You cast out to this area," and he'd come back, whoom, he got a strike. Oh, he'd reel that in, and then it was wonderful. He'd say, "Now, you see, you get the idea?" Then he'd cast another one out there. Oh! He hit another one. [laughs]

So anyway, he got in three fish while he was teaching me how to do this. Finally he just reluctantly gave me the pole. He said, "Now you go ahead and fish, see." And then off he went to get his own fish. I never hit another fish in that whole time! [laughter]

And then the time that Mike and I went dove hunting. Oh, we used to hunt together, too. So Mike said, "Now, look. You go that way and I'll go this way, and be sure you shoot out that way and I'll shoot out this way. We'll just hunt for a while, because it's not good for two people to hunt together, because once one shoots, the other one can't have a chance to shoot. So you go that way, I'll go this way, and we'll hunt for two hours, and when you come back, we'll put the whole thing together and that will be great."

So off we went, and man, I tell you. I shot everything that flew. It didn't make any difference to me what it was--I saw it, it was flying, it got shot. Well, bang, bang, and I'm shooting and having a wonderful time. I'm not sure what's doves and what wasn't doves, but in those days, it really didn't matter that much to me anyway.

So anyway, I got back, I must have had twenty-four birds. So we're walking up there, and I see Mike coming, "Hey, Mike!" Mike says, "Boy, I just heard you shooting all--you must have just done great." "Oh," I said, "I got all kinds of birds."

He said, "God, that's wonderful. I hunted my tail off. I only got twelve dove! You must--" "Oh," I said, "I must have twenty, thirty birds in here." I had one dove. I probably had thirty birds, and one dove! [laughter] I shot everything that flew. He was in hysterics! He was on the ground laughing, holding his abdomen. And to this day, when we tell this story about the two of us going out hunting, he remembers--I mean, we've been hunting many times, but he remembers this story. He remembers the story of the first time I ever went dove hunting with him, and he says, "He got so many birds, only one dove!" [laughter] It was wonderful. Oh, that was great. That was just absolutely fantastic.

Discipline in Camp

Albo: And Mike showed me how to run [the camp] and be a disciplinarian. That was not easy, because I wasn't that much older than the kids that I was the director for. All the directors subsequently were quite a bit older than the kids, and so they weren't their age. Many of the kids that I was the director for, one of them for example was Steve Gall who was in medical school with me. He was a classmate. So I was a boss of a camp in which I was essentially the age of the people that were working for me.

So it presented an immense problem, and Mike warned me it would. He told me I could handle it, but he said, "You're going to find difficulties, because you're going to have to be tough sometimes with people that you're very close to and very friendly with, but you're going to have to learn how to deal with that, because this camp has to run appropriately. You have to set your own rules. I had my rules, and you know what you liked about them and what you didn't like about them, but you've got to set your own rules, and this camp has to run. If it doesn't run correctly, it's not going to be Joe Smith's fault, it's going to be the manager's fault, which is you. If you don't run it correctly, you're going to be out of a job because people are not going to like you, and it's not going to be appropriate."

So I didn't realize how much wisdom his words had, because I'd been captain of teams, and all the way through my whole history I'd been captains, or I'd been presidents of classes, and I'd been the valedictorian at Cal, and I'd been--I'd always been sort of in a leadership position, but now I was going to have twenty-five or thirty kids my age who I was the boss of, who had to discipline them if they didn't perform appropriately.

Well, fortunately, I didn't have a lot of trouble because basically I had their respect and I abided by all the rules as well.

The Breakfast Rule

Albo: And I realized that I had sort of a rule that everyone had to be to breakfast. If it was your day off, you didn't have to come to breakfast, but if you were on duty, you had to be to breakfast, and you had to be to breakfast on time. You could get in a few minutes after the bell, but basically you had to come to breakfast.

Well, when I first made that rule, it was a rule that Mike had passed on, it didn't sit well with a few people, but for the most part they all agreed. But there were a couple of guys that were, "I'll be up in time, I don't want to eat breakfast anyway, I don't want breakfast, I don't want coffee, I don't want anything else. Why do I have to show up at breakfast?"

My explanation to them was, "Because you are part of a camp, and those people that are a part of this camp want to see that the staff is there in the morning as well. That's a part of the camp." And I tried to make another rule that the staff would not sit all together, that they would at least on the dinner meal spread themselves out through the dining hall so that they would eat at the different tables and meet the different people at the different tables, et cetera.

Well, those two things were kind of new, as far as rules went, and there were several people that weren't that keen on my rules. Those two specific rules. And it became a matter of wills, because basically they were willing to rebel against that concept, and I felt very strongly about both of those things.

So I asked Mike, "Mike, this is what I think. If I'm wrong, you tell me, and if I'm right, then I want to run it this way. What do I do to punish them? What am I supposed to do, spank them, or hold their salary back? What do I do?"

Mike said, "First of all, you're the director, and if these are going to be your rules, whether I agree with them or not is not of essence. You're the director, you want these rules, then they're part of your directorship and everyone should follow them. And if they don't want to follow them, I'll give you two

things right now. Number one, you've got my support. Number two, terminate them. If they don't want to do what you tell them to do, then fine. Be nice about it, but tell them, 'Well, then go find another job. We'll find someone else to fill the spot.'

And that's what I did. I decided that those two points were important to me, and important to running the camp properly, and that I wanted the respect of doing that. And therefore, I took a stand, and the two people that I had some difficulty with, I just frankly quietly went up to them and told them, "Look, either you do it my way, or you leave." It caught them unawares. They weren't quite ready or willing or understood the fact that I would deal with it that way. But it made it very clear, and with Mike's support, my strength was such that I didn't have to worry about suddenly this guy going to Mike Koll and saying, "Mike, this guy wants me to do something that's stupid," and then Mike having to be put in a position where he wouldn't support me.

So by going to Mike first and telling him what the problem was, and asking what he thought, Mike gave me his total support to do what I thought was the right thing to do. If they don't want to do it, then fire them. That's all there is to it.

LaBerge: So what happened? Did they stay?

Albo: They both stayed, and I never had another problem with them. They did exactly what I told them to do. But if I had had a man that wasn't supporting me, I would have been out in the cold. I would have lost my ability to be a leader.

And I was very strict about cleanliness, and I used to go around and check all the heads after the maintenance men had gone periodically. I liked to spot-check everything. I might spot-check anybody at any time.

LaBerge: As far as their jobs, not their tents--

Albo: As far as their jobs. Now, we had a rule that I established too, that every Saturday morning when the camp had to clean up and leave, that all their areas of responsibility had to be cleaned up as well, and that included their own personal tents. I would make an inspection of their personal tents and that things were put away, that the floors were swept, that the place was clean outside, there wasn't junk all over anywhere. That anybody who didn't do what they were supposed to do lost their day off. That was the way it was.

So that was another one of my rules, but I never had any trouble with that rule. Everyone--those rules were accepted by everybody, and there was never any problem.

But that was Mike that taught me how to deal with that, and it was Mike who supported me and who made it acceptable for me to take a stand and to run the camp appropriately. The camp ran very, very well. We didn't have any problems at all. When we did have some minor problems, like I had a minor problem with a cook who had been drinking--I just fired him, that was all there was to it. There were never any problems of that nature.

So we got through those years with basically no real heartaches or headaches or problems. But it was Mike who taught me. He taught me a lot.

Staff and Program

LaBerge: Before you became manager, did he give you guidelines, or "This is the way I did it--" he just left it all to you?

Albo: No, I had been there for two years, and I saw the way he ran the camp. When he chose me to be the director, the manager, the next year, which was the third year, he just--I was assistant manager to him the second year, and I was program director. Then the third year, I was manager and that was it. He just said, "You run it. If you like some of the things I did, fine; if you want to put in different programs, that's fine. You have other ideas, that's fine. You just do what you think is the right thing to do."

So he gave me a pretty much free hand to do as I wished. And to his credit, I kept nearly everything that Mike Koll had done, because everything Mike Koll had established--the little fishing stream for the kids and all that sort of thing--it was just wonderful. So we all just loved it.

I added some things, too.

LaBerge: What did you add?

Albo: Well, we added some of the evening entertainment things. They had previously not had any variety shows, and I added some variety shows. I also added--it was under my time that we added a naturalist. Things of that nature. So we had a lot of things

that we started during my time that really worked out pretty well.

LaBerge: Did you have anything to do with the hiring of the staff?

Albo: No. Never at any time was I ever asked to choose anyone to work. That was all done by Mike and his committee, basically Mike, and he would just hand me, "Here is who your staff is this year." So there was never any decision for me to make at all about who would be the head of the Kub Korral or the head of the mess hall or the head of maintenance, that was all Mike's decision, and who worked in those different departments. So he would give me a staff that he chose, always. Always Mike was the man who chose the staff.

LaBerge: It's amazing--that's a real art to choosing that staff.

Albo: No question. Because you really become a family. You're so close in those living quarters over there that people who don't fit in either learn to fit in or it's the most miserable summer in the world for them. Because I would say in all the time that I was up there, there may have been two people who really just didn't fit in, and it turned out to be kind of a miserable summer for them. But gee, over the seven, eight, nine years that I was there, to have only one or two people that didn't really fit in is just amazing.

LaBerge: Did your wife have a job when you were program director?

Albo: That's correct. When I was athletic director, she was in the Kub Korral, and then when I was program director, she was still in the Kub Korral, and then she was the head of the Kub Korral. We got married, she was the head of the Kub Korral. Then after a couple of years, then she no longer worked either.

LaBerge: But just by virtue of being there with you, did she have duties?

Albo: Oh, yes.

LaBerge: That's what I thought. What did she have--did she make the runs into Sonora, or--

Albo: No, no, she never did anything except work in the Kub Korral and in the mess hall. So she didn't have any runs into Sonora or things like that. That was never part of her job.

LaBerge: And when you were director, did you live with the staff?

Albo: Yes, until I got married, and then I lived with the staff, too. I took over Mike Koll's place, which was right next to the staff area, maybe ten steps removed from the staff area.

Mike Strengths/Uniqueness

LaBerge: Getting back to the beginning when you said you needed someone like Mike to get that place to run. What besides his competitiveness and doing his very best? Maybe that says it all.

Albo: Well, I think it does say it all in many ways, but I think it doesn't say nearly as much as it should about the man. The man was--first, he's an outdoorsman, so it's very important that whoever had that job felt that living in that manner was wonderful. He had to have a feeling of being an outdoorsman, because if you got out there and you liked a television set and a radio on every night, and you were stuck in something like that, you had to like that kind of living, and he liked it.

Secondly, you had to be a leader, and Mike Koll was a leader. He's the type of guy that--it's been said of many people but--if you were out on a battlefield and you wanted somebody standing behind you, you'd want Mike Koll. Because you know that your flank would never be attacked. He would never let anybody get beyond him. He's that type of person.

So Mike Koll was a man of his word, as honest as the day is long, and strict. A strict disciplinarian, which most of us needed anyway. Most of us had been in college and had been a little rambunctious anyway, and this was probably the first time in their lives outside of their mothers and fathers raising them that they had been disciplined. And the disciplines sometimes were--to have Mike Koll chastise you or take you aside and bawl you out was something that no one wanted to go through. He was not above doing that, as I--he never really bawled me out ever, so we got along terrifically well. But I never did anything to be bawled out about either. He would correct me; don't misunderstand me. If I did something that he didn't think was the right thing to do, he would ask me about it and correct me, and tell me, "I don't think that's the right thing to do, and I think we ought to do this or do that." Fine, that was never a problem. I could adapt to that.

But if he didn't like what someone was doing or the way they were performing, he was the first one to go up to them and discipline them. And you needed that. You needed the discipline

in the camp, you needed to be able to direct the people appropriately. You couldn't have those people [the campers] leaving and being unhappy with the facility, or it would fall down. It would deteriorate.

The pay was good, but not great. But for most summer jobs at that time, the pay was certainly better than a lot of people would have gotten in the summer. So it was more or less a vacation as well as good pay. Mike felt that he wanted you to put in the hours and the effort necessary to do a good job. He demanded a good job. If it had been somebody that had been a little wishy-washy, or someone who had been perhaps a little less or a little more tolerant and a little less of a disciplinarian, I think things could have gotten terribly out of hand, as frankly they did with some directors up there who were not strong-willed enough to make the people toe the mark. Of course, as soon as Mike saw that that was the case, then he would remove those people, or get them to toe the mark and/or get rid of them, one of the two.

LaBerge: Do you have any specific examples of maybe kinds of behavior he wouldn't tolerate or--

Albo: Well, you couldn't swear.

LaBerge: Oh, I didn't realize--I'm not surprised, because I don't think I've ever heard a staff member swear.

Albo: No. He would not tolerate any vulgarity at all. The programs for the entertainment had to be clean. No dirty jokes or anything that would even border on being slightly risqué. He just didn't like that kind of thing. And there was no place for it. Absolutely no place for it.

He didn't like the staff members to smoke, and he absolutely forbid it outside of the staff area. I felt strongly about that too; none of us liked the staff members--but what they did in their own tents was certainly something that they could do. But he didn't like it.

He absolutely felt very strongly about drinking to excess. I mean, that was really bad, bad, bad. So we had staff parties, as you well know, every Friday night, because Saturday was changeover day. So every Friday night, the staff would have a party for the week, and then they were always fun. It wasn't a matter of money, but he felt strongly about a certain amount of beer and a certain amount of liquor, and usually it was confined to beer, that should be allowed at the parties. He didn't like to see anybody get verbose or vulgar or anything like that.

LaBerge: Did you help plan the staff parties?

Albo: Each group had a responsibility, like one week the Kub Korral would do it, one week the pool people would do it, one week--and so on. Then the director was responsible for the last week.

Lair Spirit

LaBerge: Could you say something about the Lair spirit?

Albo: Well, I can say a lot about the Lair spirit. My children, my two sons and my daughter--

LaBerge: Do you want to give me their names?

Albo: Yes. Bob, Robert Wendell, is the oldest; named after myself and grandfather. Deborah Lynn, Debbie. And then Douglas. Douglas was actually named after my wife's favorite little boy that she took care of at the Lair. It was Larry Lindsay's son, Doug Lindsay. Larry Lindsay was of course a great Lair man. She named Doug after Douglas Lindsay, because she loved that boy so much, and she just named our son after him.

My daughter and son both worked at the Lair. They still go to the Lair. My son went last year with his new son, one and a half years old, and his wife. My daughter and her husband will be going this year. She just married this year. But they love the Lair. My daughter absolutely thought the Lair was the greatest thing in the world, and the friends which they made at the Lair formed the basis of their friends for life, basically.

The Lair spirit is such that anyone who has worked at the Lair feels a camaraderie or a one-ness with anyone else who has worked up there. You know all the people, most of the staff that worked there after I, I'd seen all these kids grow up. I had practically been part of their family as they grew up and came to the Lair. And that's the wonderful thing, is that my daughter and my son wanted to go to Cal so that they could work at the Lair. The only one who didn't was Douglas, who went to UCLA, and he always regrets the fact that he never worked at the Lair.

LaBerge: I've heard many people say that.

Albo: That's exactly why my kids went to Cal. I mean, they wanted to work at the Lair. That was the most important thing in their life. They had nothing but wonderful feelings about the spirit

and everything that the Lair had to offer. It was wonderful. And there's a camaraderie there that you just don't get anywhere else in the world. The Big Fire and the talks in the evening. I always loved the Sunday services. I used to give many of them. I used to love the Sunday church service down by the brook. It was always wonderful to have the kids sing, those young boys and girls doing all the church service and everything. It was just wonderful. It was a feeling that you just don't get from anywhere else.

And you made some wonderful friends that remain a part of your whole life forever. Even though you may not ever see them in the next five or ten years, when you do see them, they're still like it's your brother or your sister, because they're really good friends.

Alumni Association

LaBerge: What connection do you think it has with the Alumni Association?

Albo: That's a very good question. I would venture to say that anybody who ever went to the Lair probably is a lifetime member of the Alumni Association. I think the Lair probably did more to promote loyalty to the University than anything I could possibly think of. I can't imagine anything else that the University would sponsor or support, like the alumni camp, that would bring as much glory and love for the University, any more than the alumni camp.

Now, obviously, you and I both know that they don't have anything to do with the alumni camp, other than the fact that they provide the students, and the students then become the people that make the Lair of the Bear. And that's, I think, the most important thing is that it's the people that make the Lair of the Bear. I think it was Mike Koll that saw that potential, and pulled all those young kids together and gave them a job and a purpose. It's all for the glory of the University anyway. The alumni reaps the harvest of having most of these people join the Alumni Association, but you and I both know that there are many people that go there that aren't even Cal alumni for that matter. But that's never stopped them, and many of the people who went there supported the University of California only because they love the alumni camp.

Granlibakken Alumni Venture

- Albo: And of course, we tried the alumni camp up at Granlibakken, which--
- LaBerge: Were you involved in that?
- Albo: Well, I was involved only from the standpoint that Larry Lindsay, who headed it in the beginning, and I spent some time up there sort of helping to build it and to get it going. But no, I was never employed specifically by the people up there, and I never really got involved other than to be there as a friend of Larry Lindsay's and to help him in the early years. But that never got off the ground. It just never seemed to do the same thing.
- LaBerge: My impression from Mike was, too, that because they had to keep staff there year-round, it was too expensive.
- Albo: It was too expensive, and it was a different type of existence. I don't know. I think people that go skiing are a little bit different than people who go out and camp in the outdoors during the summer. I think you need better facilities to go skiing. I think you need better heat and better warmth. You needed a good ski hill, and Granlibakken didn't have a good ski hill. You had to leave the place to go skiing. And during the summer, who would want to go to Granlibakken when you had the Lair of the Bear?

So I think it had problems from the start. I was never optimistic that was going to be successful. I was always optimistic that Camp Blue would be successful, as was everyone else who knew what Camp Gold was, and they knew that Camp Blue would be equally successful.

And in the early years, in order to assure that Camp Blue would be successful, I remember that Mike went to some people--like the Tucks and other people--and asked them to go to Camp Blue so that at least some of the established people would go over to that camp to make other people want to go to that camp as well. Because there were a lot of very strong feelings about some of the people who went to Camp Gold that they didn't want to go to Camp Blue.

He felt that it was important to get some of these old standbys to go over there, and they did. They did it for Mike, and I think it was very successful in what it did, because it certainly established a solid group for that camp, which grew stronger and stronger as time went on.

LaBerge: Give the old tradition and--

Albo: Yes, exactly. It gave it tradition. I think that's a very good way to put it.

Alumni Activities

LaBerge: Had you yourself been involved in the Alumni Association or any of the camp committees, or since--

Albo: Well, in the early years I was on the Camp Committee for many years--oh, maybe seven, eight years after I was the director, all the way through medical school and for a while after medical school, and when I was a doctor and everything. I did function as a member of the Alumni Camp Committee.

But, as time has gone on, other things occupied my time, so I moved out of that, and I have not returned to any of the committees as far as the Alumni Association goes. I did participate in the Alumni Career Days for years and years, and I did the medical part for the Alumni Career Day.

I also have been one of the surgeons for Cowell Hospital for twenty-nine, thirty years, and I am chief of surgery there. So I have maintained my connection to the University. I'm also on the Lawrence Hall of Science board. So I have not by any stretch of the imagination deserted the University, and as far as the Alumni Association goes, I still support a lot of their different functions. And my children, of course, having worked at the Lair for all those years, have supported them as well. I still teach at UCSF too, and I'm still a professor there.

LaBerge: Well, Ann Flinn told me you only sleep four or five hours a night.

Albo: [laughs] There's something to that.

Other Directors

LaBerge: When you stopped being director, did you write up a little résumé, or pass on some of what you learned to your follower?

Albo: The man who succeeded me was Terry Cole.

LaBerge: Oh, okay, who had worked with you.

Albo: Who had worked with me for about five years; he was my program director. So it was almost natural for him to take over as the director of the camp when I moved on, which he did for years and years thereafter. Terry was an excellent director, one of the better directors.

The only problem Terry had was he was not a good disciplinarian. He's the sweetest, nicest guy in the world, his wife was a love, and unfortunately, Terry--he's always been, and he still is to this day, very happy-go-lucky, not necessarily loose but much less structured. I think the director up there, I think that what Mike had established and what I had carried on, I think Terry, if he had been in the early years, could have destroyed it. But because the discipline and everything had been set up and established by Mike first and then been carried on pretty much by me as well, I think when Terry took over, it did not slip noticeably to anybody at the camp. It slipped to me, and I'm sure Mike would probably have noted it too, because the staff area was never clean enough as far as I was concerned. It was awful--

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LaBerge: We were talking about Terry Cole, and if you gave any tips to your successor.

Albo: Yes. I didn't think it was necessary to, because I thought he would carry it on more or less like I had done it, and as Mike had done it before me, which is basically what Terry did.

LaBerge: Did you have any relationship with the director at Camp Blue, or was that Mike?

Albo: That was Mike. It was Mike when I was there, and then--all the time that I was there, it was Mike. Dave Fuller did it after Mike, and of course, Dave Fuller had been on the staff with me. So the relationship between us was excellent.

Dr. Albo, the Magician

LaBerge: So that we don't miss--I'd like to hear a little bit about your magic shows.

Albo: Oh. [laughs] Well, I started doing magic when I was six years old. I was given a magic set by my mom and dad, and it became a disease. I have now the largest magic collection in the world, and probably the largest ever assembled. I have written an eight-volume text--3,500 pages--on magic and its history and how to do it, et cetera. And I continue to write books on magic.

LaBerge: What's the name of your--

Albo: Classic Magic with Apparatus. There are eight volumes of it.

Anyway, I think that's one of the things that first attracted Mike to me, was that I was an athlete, but I was pretty well known around the University as doing magic shows, too. In those days, I used to work my way through college--in fact, I worked my way through college and medical school--doing magic shows.

So everyone knew me as a magician. I think perhaps even more so than my athletics. I think they probably knew more about my magic.

So when I went to the Lair, I immediately started as the athletic director, but I did magic shows at the Lair. So year in and year out, I would do magic shows, and--

LaBerge: Like at night for the kids?

Albo: At night on the programs. I never did give magic lessons. If I had it to do over again, I would have given magic lessons. I should have. But it would have been a wonderful program to teach the kids how to do magic; it would have been a wonderful program. Because you could have taught them some simple things, and out of that, you would have gotten one or two who would have been really interested, and who would have gone on and done even more with it. It would have been a very good introduction to them.

But I always did at least one magic show a week, and sometimes two. That carried on right from the first year on. Now, Mike wanted to assure that I would do it, so he would give me like \$100 to buy magic before the year began, and then I would--in those days, I didn't have quite as much magic as I have now--so the first year, of course, I had enough magic to do the magic. The second year, he wanted me to do more magic. I said, "Well, gee, I did most all of the stuff for the last year. I don't have that much more."

He said, "Well, then buy some stuff and learn to do it, and the Lair will support that." So for all the time that I was at

the Lair, at least for the next four or five years that I was there, I would do a magic show of one type or another, and Mike would give me \$100 at the beginning of each year--which was a lot of money in those days--to buy some magic. It wouldn't buy much magic, because a good magic trick would be \$20, \$25, so you're only talking about maybe three, four, five tricks at most. But I would purchase enough magic to do magic shows up there.

Also up there, I met many people who were interested in magic, the most prominent of which was a man named Doug Kelley, who used to go to the Lair every year. He was the head of criminology at U.C. Berkeley, wrote Twenty Cells to Nuremberg, and actually gave his library to the University--on the occult, on witchcraft, et cetera. The University of California has the largest library in the world on occult. It was all in Doug Kelley's library.

In any event, I met Doug Kelley up there, and Doug and I became very close friends. He was a magician, and started as a magician. He had become a very well-known magician during his time. He and I became very close friends, and I learned a tremendous amount from Doug Kelley as a magician. It was wonderful. He was a wonderful gentleman.

So anyway, that association was terrific. All the magic which I did up there, I truly enjoyed, and I think perhaps even to this day, people who saw me perform up there still remember that I did magic. I was exposed to a lot of people, when you think about 250 people a week for ten to twelve weeks for eight years, that's a lot of people.

Memorable People

LaBerge: What other memorable campers did you meet, either speakers or families or--

Albo: Well, yes. I remember Pappy Waldorf was a wonderful, wonderful man. Wonderful Californian.

LaBerge: Did he come as a camper or as a speaker?

Albo: He came as a speaker. Most all these people were speakers. Doug Kelley, who I just talked to you about, I just loved him. He was just a wonderful, wonderful human being. Arleigh Williams; what a great guy. Just a wonderful man. And then the--he was the chancellor of Irvine--

LaBerge: Dan Aldrich?

Albo: Dan Aldrich. What a wonderful guy. I met him up there, and oh, I spent many hours with the Aldrich family. The Tuck family, I think, is probably one of the most extraordinary families that I ever met, and I met them up there. Bob Tuck and I became absolutely fast friends. We bought a home together at Tahoe, which we still own now, even though Janor obviously is still alive but Bob has passed away. But Janor and I still own that home up there at Tahoe.

LaBerge: I didn't realize that.

Albo: I taught most of that family to swim. They were really close friends, from Kingwell all the way down. I remember when they were just babies. Those were wonderful times. That was a great family; that was just an unbelievable family.

LaBerge: How about the Kragens?

Albo: Kragens: marvelous. Adrian Kragen, who taught at the law school, of course, and Kenny, and his sister, I practically raised those two kids. I taught them both how to play baseball, how to swim. They used to follow me around like the Pied Piper. I remember them very, very well. Adrian and his wife, Billie, were just absolutely two of the most wonderful people in the world. They have been patients--all these people that I've named have been patients of mine. Those were great people, great days.

LaBerge: Do you continue to go to the Lair now?

Albo: I go to the Lair almost every year. Not as a camper, but I'll just go up for a weekend and kind of walk through, visit with a few of the people that I still know. Have maybe one meal there. My kids still go, and I will go up there and visit them when they're there. Then of course, when the reunions come, I missed the last one because of another commitment, but I've been to almost all the reunions.

Staff Reunions and Relationships

LaBerge: Tell me something about the reunions. This is staff reunion?

Albo: Staff reunions, the parties have been just absolutely tremendous. All the kids that come back from all the different eras, and get together for a weekend, it's just wonderful.

LaBerge: Is it at the Lair?

Albo: It's at the Lair.

LaBerge: And who organizes it?

Albo: Mike.

LaBerge: Still, even though he's not involved, so to speak?

Albo: Yes. The last one was about three, four years ago, and I didn't make it because I had a commitment elsewhere, and it really broke my heart, because I just feel so strongly about everybody that's there. But they're due for another one pretty soon, and when they have it, Marge and I are going to be there for sure.

LaBerge: Well, do you have anything else to add that you--

Albo: Well, I would say this: that the most important thing that's ever happened to me in my life has been the University of California. I can't ever remember as a child not knowing that the University was up there, and not doing things up at the University. And certainly, one of the most important parts of the University has not only been my education that I received scholastically in the University and UCSF, but the education and the friendships and what the Lair has provided for me, as an alumni and meeting center. My whole personality, I think, has been molded by what happened up at the Lair.

So it's such an intricate part of my life, I don't think I could function without what the University and the Lair has given to me. And certainly one of the most important and influential people in all of this, amongst all of the people that I have met and seen, has been Mike Koll, because Mike has been a tremendous influence on my life.

LaBerge: Shall we end there?

Albo: Yes, I think that's fine. Well, let me just say one other thing. I think, and I haven't said enough about it, but my wife feels just as strongly about all of this as I do. I talked about my children, but she just thinks the Lair is one of the great things that's happened to her. Her dad used to speak up there; first she was a young girl who went with her dad up to the Lair, where he gave the talks as one of the speakers, and then she loved it so much that she eventually worked there, and actually worked there before I did.

And then of course, we met there, and then ended up getting married. Our children were all born--well, she was down here and I was the director up there, so I had to drive down in order to be there with the birth of the three children. So I was the camp director, and then she would come up after she had given birth to the child, within a week or two, she was back up at the Lair.

We had a cabin that was not too far removed from the Lair, over on Pinecrest Lake that belonged to her dad, so she would stay there with the children, although in the end, all the children were over at the Lair, along with Marge and me.

So those were great days.

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CAMP GOLD MANAGER, 1971-1981: AN INTERVIEW WITH NOEL HELMBRECHT

An Interview Conducted by
Germaine LaBerge
in 1993

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name NOEL ALBERT HELMBRECHT

Date of birth 22 JULY 38 Birthplace ROCHESTER, MINN

Father's full name FRED LAURENCE HELMBRECHT

Occupation PLUMBING CONTRACTOR Birthplace HAYFIELD, MIN

Mother's full name EDNA MARIE FEARING

Occupation HOUSEWIFE Birthplace LONG PRAIRIE, MINN

Your spouse JOYCE ROSTER HELMBRECHT

Occupation ACCOUNTING Birthplace PALO ALTO, CA

Your children JOSHUA FREDERICK HELMBRECHT (20 OCT 65)

MARK HOKAN HELMBRECHT (16 MAY 67)

Where did you grow up? ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA; GILROY, CA, ^{SAN FRANCISCO} WATSONVILLE ^{MORGAN HILL} } CA.

Present community ANGELS CAMP CA (CALIFORNIA COUNTY)

Education H.S. - LIVE OAK UNION H.S., MORGAN HILL, CA

UCB (A.B. JAN '61), ^{SAN JOSE STATE} SACRAMENTO STATE
^{STANISLAU STATE}

Occupation(s) HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS TEACHER / COACH FEB '64 - JUNE '83

SALESMAN FOR INNERSTATE INC OF SONOMA CA 1991-PRESENT

Areas of expertise SECONDARY MATHEMATICS TEACHING AND CURRICULUM,

BASKETBALL COACHING, LAIR OF THE GOLDEN BEAR MANAGEMENT,

H-H VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES, RENEWING OAK CHARACTER IN BARRELS

Other interests or activities DIREKTOR, ¹⁹⁹¹⁻⁹⁴ CAA; HC-PAC A LOCAL

ORGANIZATION TO SAVE CREEK FLOW, LAIR OF GOLDEN BEAR,

CAL SPORTS

Organizations in which you are active CALIFORNIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION,

HC-PAC, CALIFORNIA CO CAL ALUMNI CLUB, LAIR STAFF ALUMNI CLUB

**X CAMP GOLD MANAGER, 1971-1981: AN INTERVIEW WITH NOEL
HELMBRECHT**

[Interview 11: January 28, 1993] ##

Introduction to the University

LaBerge: You grew up in Minnesota and went to high school in San Jose?

Helmbrecht: Actually in Morgan Hill, Live Oak Union High School, Morgan Hill.

LaBerge: Okay. Tell me about coming to the University [of California at Berkeley].

Helmbrecht: Well, from the time that I lived in both Gilroy and Morgan Hill, south Santa Clara County, a group of friends and I for some reason always were Stanford [University] rooters. By the time I was in high school in Morgan Hill, our German teacher would take us one year to Stanford, one year to Cal. He had a lot of connections, usually to the German Department, and somebody would talk to us or read something from a German novel, or poems, or something, and then talk to us.

I applied to Stanford and, realizing it's difficult to get into Stanford, also applied to Cal. I was accepted at both, and then the bills kind of came. At that time, Stanford was around \$3,000; Cal was \$47, and I think Bowles Hall was about \$60-\$70 a month. I don't think you spent \$1,000 a year to go to college here at that time. And my dad was a plumbing contractor, my mother an eighth-grade graduate, and my dad a high school graduate who didn't get to go to college when his father became sick and he had to run the family farm.

So I was definitely going to be going to college, and he said, "Well, you've earned, wherever you want to go, we'll figure out some way to pay for it," and that sort of thing. And he never said, "If you go to Cal, you can have fancier clothes or a car," or something, but I just looked at it and said, "There's really no reason to go to Stanford instead of Cal," so I decided to go to Cal.

And really enjoyed doing that. It obviously was the right decision for me. At least I've stayed very active in Cal things. My license is HLM BEAR, so that says something, and I'm on the board of directors of the Alumni Association, and a founding member of the Calaveras County Alumni Club. Right now we're forming a Lair Staff Alumni Club. I'm kind of the push behind that, though I'm staying out of the original-- I help them organize, but I'm trying to keep Mr. [David] Flinn, Mr. [Robert] Olson, Mr. [Ray] Bosch, David Smith, Noel Helmbrecht--the people who currently are either on the board or working for the Alumni Association from being the push behind this. Let's let the--so Betsy Jo Carleton and a very nice group of staffers are kind of spearheading the organization, and we will support and be good Indians for them. Half the time, it's harder to find good Indians a lot of times than chiefs. [laughter]

Order of the Lair Working Bear

LaBerge: Well, Mike told me too that you're in a volunteer group that either cleans up the camp or gets the camp ready?

Helmbrecht: Yes. That's another one. Order of the Lair Working Bear, which is no longer--

LaBerge: Mike's talked about that.

Helmbrecht: I was there every year that we had it. In fact, when I ran the Lair, Mike White, the old football coach, used to always set up both camps, put out the beds, the mattresses, the tent tops, and cabinets, and take a few shutters off the bathrooms and so forth. He always based himself at Camp Blue. Roger Theder, who later was our coach, head coach also, and Bob Gambold, who coached with the [Denver] Broncos, and a large group of people who knew Mike well, former football players and former Lair staffers and so--maybe twenty, twenty-five people would come up--I don't know, Mike paid them, whatever, \$50, \$100 to where they'd take a week and mostly sat around,

drank beer. I mean, they'd work very hard during the day, and then would sit around at night and swap stories on each other. It was really kind of a boys' week off in the mountains, and I think it sure recharged his batteries. He was a former director of Camp Gold, and Mike White was close to Mike [Koll].

But they never seemed to do a very good job on Camp Gold, because that was pretty far away. [laughs] And so they slowly were losing--this guy was coaching now with the [Buffalo] Bills, and he couldn't make it out; so one year they had like thirteen guys, and they got almost nothing done at Gold. I just told Mike, I said, "You know, if it doesn't hurt Mike White's feelings, I would rather set my own camp up; I can get a crew together."

So I got--actually, my current boss, Bob Rogers, I asked him to come about '74, so I started setting up Camp Gold, and always set it up the rest of the time that I was director.

Kind of from that, the Order of the Lair Working Bear got going the week after these things were done. A group of people and former staffers, campers and generally a couple of the powers-that-be from the Alumni Association--I know Bill Milliken and Claude Hutchison and people like that have come up, Shirley Conner, the current president and those people were kind of encouraged to come up when it's clean and nice, and just kind of enjoy--.

And they cleaned. They would take all the furniture out of the lodge and hose it all down, and wash all the windows, and things like that. Just at that time, the staff was barely getting there because of the way the--they were on quarters. And you had no problem at the end of summer; the problem was at the start of summer. But by the time I left, most of your staff came in Friday or Saturday, and the campers arrive Saturday. When we first came, we always spent a week like they do now, they go home May 20 and come up, and it's almost--they're ready to come before Ray's [Bosch, the current Lair director] ready to have them.

But slowly, this thing just grew and grew and grew, and when Mike stopped--really, when Ray took over, and about the time I think that Mike retired from the Alumni Association, they decided to phase out the Order of the Lair Working Bear. I still--I bring up about twelve, thirteen former staffers, and we put the poly on everybody's tent in both camps. That's just poly weekend; it's usually the weekend after Memorial Day. This year, we're going to have to do it I think on

Memorial Day, which we don't really like, because a few of our people have commitments to family and stuff.

But we always do it, and it's mainly just a good time to get together. Most of the people that are organizing the Lair Staff Alumni Club are in that group, and it's just mostly people who worked for me from '69 through '81, we just go up and have a good time. I make chili, and we sit around and smoke cigars and have bad booze and swap stories and stuff at night. It's the same thing that Mike White used to do, except we talk more about Cal and each other probably than just the football team, though the football team's always a big subject, too. It kind of recharges our batteries, and then we're ready to go.

And if I'm really pinched, I make sure I get Mark [Helmbrecht] and a couple of his friends, so we have a couple of young guys to do all the flying. You need two guys to jump on each tent. They just run up to the tent, put their foot on the side, and just go up and then grab, okay? They just take the poly right over the tent, and four people tie it off and you're on to the next tent, and we really can roll. We do it in a day, and it would take--it saves Ray money, too. I don't know whether he makes money on it, by the time he pays for the chili and us being around, but I think it's a good way of having former staffers be around and at least be productive. You're not just mooching; you're doing something while you're doing it. It's a good time.

Introduction to the Lair

- LaBerge: Oh, that's good. How did you ever hear about the Lair in the first place?
- Helmbrecht: Well, the Lair--actually, it came through Dave and Ann Flinn. Dave and Ann Flinn were staffers when I was in college. Never went to the Lair when I was in college; my dad was a plumbing contractor. I made my way through Cal by being a plumber every summer.
- LaBerge: More lucrative than working at the Lair?
- Helmbrecht: I worked every summer from the time I was ten on, and did different things. But by that time, I was productive, and I would go out with his best plumber. He and I would--Gil and I would always outwork John and Ernie, the other two plumbers,

even though there was really only one real plumber, because Gil was so good and I just kind of kept him going, right? That's kind of been my job in a lot of places, almost to be the expediter. But--

LaBerge: I'm sure that came in handy at the Lair.

Helmbrecht: Oh, it sure did.

LaBerge: That's the main topic of conversation.

Helmbrecht: And I appreciate John the plumber who's the current plumber now, and is an excellent person. And the electrical and all those different things, it helps to have some of those--just a few skills with your hands and so forth.

LaBerge: So you heard about it--

Helmbrecht: Terry Cole, who you'll probably interview somewhere along the line or should, he was I think either a seven- or nine-year manager, he worked for the association and worked directly under Mike, kind of helped select staff and worked here nine months in Berkeley, then ran Camp Gold. An awful lot of the Tuck family worked for Terry, so he's kind of from like '60 or '61 or '62, somewhere around there, to '69 when Bob Mason took over for a couple of years, and then I took over in '71. I was assistant director the first two years, and athletic director. I was a basketball coach and tennis coach in San Jose at the time.

But I heard about the Lair from--actually, Dave called and said, "Terry's going to be leaving, and it looks as though the Lair needs a manager."

LaBerge: Did you ever visit it?

Helmbrecht: I visited once about three years before, when Dave and the best man at my wedding, another Cal guy, were camping at Camp Blue and they said, "Why don't you just come up on Sunday? Just drive up. It's a real nice drive." So we spent about an hour watching--we went to their tent and kind of walked around, I think we had lunch, had the barbecue with them, walked up, watched the college guys play volleyball--best volleyball I'd ever seen; it was a bunch of guys that were playing. It may have even been Ray--I think he was at Camp Gold at the time, but there was a bunch of Santa Barbara basketball players--Murdoch--I remember Hal Murdoch was one. And they were just outstanding volleyball players, at a time when volleyball was kind of a little picnic-kind of game,

where you kind of slap and get it over. Well, these guys were crunching, playing it right and well.

Then we went over to Camp Gold and talked with Gail Tuck, who had just started on the staff. Ann knows the Tuck family real well, Ann and Dave do. And then we just got in the car and went back home, so we were maybe there for two, three hours; four hours at the most.

Interview with Mike Koll

Helmbrecht: So I called Mike--it was right before Easter--and I said, "I understand that you're looking for a manager. I don't know if I'm the person or not, but I was recommended by Dave, and currently I'm a high school teacher, I'm off my summers; I work in the cannery, teach summer school. I've got a young family, a two-year-old and a three-year-old--" or actually, I had a three-year-old and an almost two-year-old at that time; it was before May, Mark was two in May.

He said, "Why don't we--I'm going to be going to Hawaii this next week," it was Easter vacation. "Let's get a time. Could you come in late in the day on Monday, sometime on Monday?" I said, "Yeah," well then, we made it five o'clock or something; I got out of school at three, and drove up. So he set up an interview with me.

LaBerge: And you'd never met him before?

Helmbrecht: I'd never met Mike Koll. So I walked in to Mike, and we talked for about, oh, fifteen minutes, and he said, "Well, let me tell you. I've already hired that manager. I hired him last week. A staffer from two years ago, he's married to the assistant track coach's daughter whom I know, who's also a former staffer. So he really knows the staff. But there are, even still, staffers that were on staff with him. That worries me, and I would--what would it take? Sounds like you could be the athletic director, and we need an athletic director. That's one of the jobs we're filling right now. What would it take to get you to come up with your family?" And I was like thirty-one, I think, thirty or thirty-one.

I said, [thinking to himself] "Well, let me see. My house payment is this. If I make this much at the camp, what can I live on?" And I told him, "It would take \$450 a month," which was very true, but the staff was getting \$85 a month at

that time. The girls were; the guys were getting \$110 at that time, for the same job. That's another change. Equal pay, I've got to tell you that--that's a good story. Make sure the equal pay thing--to me, that's a good story.

LaBerge: Okay.

Helmbrecht: Because that was one of our--that's early seventies, the whole staff threatened to strike on this one, and Mike handled it so slick, it's amazing. Okay.

But I said, "\$450," and he kind of said, "Let me get back to you tomorrow," I think it was or something, or "let me think about it," or something. And he just hired me the next day.

LaBerge: This is in fifteen minutes? Because he told me he interviewed people--he could tell in five minutes if he wanted to hire somebody.

Helmbrecht: Oh, yes. He just knew I was--I guess I'm outgoing enough or something, and he just said, "Okay, this gives me another person who doesn't know the staff, little older, his wife's going to come," you know. And I think he just said, "I think we can handle that," and I think I said, "Well, I need to talk to my wife, right! And make sure she wants to do this." And she was a little tentative. She said--she'd finished two years at San Jose State, we got married, she never has finished college, Joyce hasn't. And with a three-year-old and what's going to be a two-year-old. But she had come up that three years before; that was before Josh was born, so it was at least three years before, and she just said, "Well, if that's what you--sounds good to me. It's better than being in hot San Jose with the smog."

First Summer at the Lair, 1969

Helmbrecht: So we decided to do it, and actually '69 was the coldest early summer that we ever spent there. They used to have a big sewer system, and it blew right into our tent, and it was just so--it smelled bad--it was the kitchen one. It wouldn't smell of sewage, it smelled this kind of sweet, kind of different, greasy kind of smell is what it had, as you're trying to break down grease, mainly.

LaBerge: And did you live in the staff area?

Helmbrecht: Yes, lived in the staff area. There were three large tents: Mike had his tent, Bob Mason and Melinda were in this tent, and we were in what was really called the guest tent. The guest tent became our tent.

LaBerge: And Bob Mason was the--

Helmbrecht: Bob Mason was the director, and Melinda Mason, Melinda Ragan Mason, was his wife. Over the next two years, they split up. The second year was not a good year for Bob. He was trying to get into vet school and didn't get into vet school, and eventually through talking to Dr. Najarian, he got to go to Minnesota. Used his Lair connections and got in, and he's a vet today. And is a very fine person; excellent fisherman, with Bobby Tuck and those guys. He still finds time to get away with the men. He's very close to T. Cole. He and I, we get along, it's just that we're not--we just never--it was a big gap in age.

Actually, he had to go back to Hawaii always two weeks before the end of camp so I took over, Ray came up and was athletic director for me. So Ray kind of worked for me, where now we kind of work for Ray. And it worked out that way.

LaBerge: So what was that first year like? What was it like being on staff?

Helmbrecht: We were very--we were much more separate from the staff than Bob was. First, we're rookies, and then we're not in the same situation. We're not worried about who's going to be our girlfriend and boyfriend and so forth. We're married, we've got to worry about these little kids. My oldest one, Josh, was the one that stayed around.

Little Mark

Helmbrecht: Mark, first week--I'm trying to think. Annie Baker was head of Kub Korral, and she came to me like Monday afternoon about three o'clock and she said, "We've lost Mark. He's gotten out somehow." And he's only been in--that morning was the first time he was ever in there.

He made it through the morning, and in the afternoon he was just gone. So I just went looking for him, and found him playing with some kids up behind the lodge. He was adopted by some seven- or eight-year-olds; he was two years, one month,

but he talked really good. He talked very early, and he was just this little midget but with his little skinny legs in cowboy boots; he loved those boots.

So the next day I put him in the Kub Korral in the morning and said, "Okay, you stay in here, we'll see you at lunchtime, or we'll come back and get you at 11:30," whatever. And I just walked away, and watched him. [laughs] He looks around, and goes over and grabs the milk carton, goes over by the doctor's tent, and up over the fence, onto the doctor's bench, and off he goes.

So I just followed him. He went down to what used to be the--you've never seen it, it used to be just below the doctor's shack towards tent 39, and we made a pool in there to fish. We would fish every Monday night. The kids under twelve could catch one fish. We would stock it with these nice trout.

He went down there to the pond, so it's mainly three feet deep, and he just threw some rocks in, and then wandered back, and went into the store, and tried to talk Sally out of some candy or something, and they were told they could have juice bars but that's all. So finally I think he took his juice bar.

And he wandered off and found some kids up around the lodge and just started playing. And so we just told the Kub Korral, "He seems to know what he's doing, he doesn't go in the water." He would ask a staffer, "I've got to go to the bathroom, will you come wipe me?" He would gross them out. Somehow it became--tinkle and stinky were the--not number one and number two, and Hughie Tuck--one of the few things that ever grossed Hughie Tuck out. But he would just say, "Come out, somebody's got to wipe me." [laughter] He was that kind of a forward kid, where Josh would just never--he was always shy, he stayed by Mom or stayed by Dad. So he just kind of wandered--and we just told Annie that, "Put him in, if he gets out he gets out; if he wants to leave, just let him leave. If he wants to be here with the kids and play in here, fine. If he wants to go outside, that's fine. Just let him loose, okay? We won't sign him in or sign him out. You're not responsible for him, in other words. Try to keep him from getting hit by a swing or whatever, but, you know--." They were told they need to be good kids and try not to spoil them, and if they're being bad, correct them just like you're a parent too, and then we'll figure out whether it was too much or too little, but we'd rather have him corrected than just stay there. So it was a--

LaBerge: So they grew up really then--

Helmbrecht: Every summer. And Mark's been at the Lair--I think physically he's been at the Lair more than any other single person, more than Mike even. Because he spent nineteen full summers there. See, Mike spent about seven or eight, and he comes in for two or three days and so forth. Even the Koll girls, see, would only come in two or three weeks a summer when they were growing up, and then were three or four years on the staff, Loretta and Lynnle.

And Mark continues to work twelfth week, and he comes up and helps us, so he's probably got at least twenty full summers of being at the Lair. And Josh worked two summers, so he might even be second, because they both spent--you know, when you spend eleven full summers there, and then Josh spent two other summers--actually, Mark spent six; he was on the staff six years, which was kind of weird. He's the last staffer to be on the staff before he got to Cal, because he came up--actually Moira Smith decided she did not want to spend the summer running the office in the middle of the first week, and left. The maintenance crew chief from Gold, Chris Brocchini--

LaBerge: Oh, yes, I remember Chris.

Helmbrecht: He went to become the office person, and they needed a maintenance man, they asked Mark, because he was up visiting Doug Flinn. So Mark called up, and he is the last person to be a staffer before going to college. He was accepted at Cal and he was going in September, but--it was lucky, it was the only place he applied to, but he was accepted. He had pretty good grades and had good SAT scores and stuff, so he wasn't too worried about it.

Athletic Director, 1969

LaBerge: Well, let's go back to your job as the athletic director that first couple of years, and your experience just being on staff.

Helmbrecht: Okay. As athletic director, I was a tennis coach, but I was never a good tennis player. I mean, I think Mike expected me to be a better player than I was. I was actually a fairly good coach, I felt, and we weren't last in the league when we had the worst talent. And when I went to Bret Harte [High

School] at about the same time, they'd never had a winning season and we had a winning season.

But I was much more of a coach than a player. I was really a basketball player and soccer player in college, and I was on the crew with Dave, and then played 145's basketball, and then ended up playing soccer for Coach DiGrazia. That's where I got my Big C, but as a goalie, not as a real soccer player, a goalie. An old basketball player who just could get in the way and then kick the ball or throw the ball out of the goal area.

LaBerge: So you mainly did tennis at the Lair?

Helmbrecht: Mainly you teach tennis, you umpire the softball game, you--it was ridiculous for me to give volleyball clinics, but I made sure I talked with Dave and Loretta Tuck Monaco, who were hotshots in volleyball at the time. My friend Mike Pratt was playing on a team at the time, so they gave me enough stuff. I had taken a class as a P.E. major at Cal, so I pulled my old syllabus out, so I could tell them what to do, but that was really all. And generally, each week I would have somebody, either another staffer or a camper, help out, because there were usually some very good players. So as you're instructing new players, it's nice to have someone who can do the things. You say, "Do," and they bump perfect and they hit perfect and they set perfect, and so it works out really well.

But I think he expected me to be a better tennis player, because it's so important to him. So very quickly, I think probably 90 percent of the matches I've played with Mike, I've always been his opponent, because he would not select--he would only select me in a real pinch, because he generally, he will generally pick the best of the remaining three players. He doesn't lose often.

Mike Koll, the Tennis Player

LaBerge: Well, is this a good time then to talk about Mike's competitiveness?

Helmbrecht: Okay. He is--I think he is as competitive as anybody I've ever known. He really likes to win. I have played, or sat at the court, when he and Jane [Koll] have played people where he has just told her, "Stand there. If it comes to you, hit it. Don't go back on any lobs. Don't poach. You make sure you

guard down the line, keep your racket ready, I'll take all the rest." And then [pow pow pow] go out and crush some other husband-and-wife team or something, because he's really an effective tennis player.

LaBerge: See, I didn't even know that about him.

Helmbrecht: He has very different strokes. And Jane will just smile and--she knows how to deal with Mike very well. He's a different tennis player, and he never changes his grip. Most people have their hand--I don't know if you're a tennis player--but have their hand on top, and stroke through, and then switch their grip and place your thumb like this [demonstrating]; he takes a Western grip, baseball grip, and hits this side, and hits all his backhands with the same side of the racket. Never uses the back of the racket. So at the net, he's just a fan like this, right, and he's got this forehand that's an old--it's a Golden Gate Park Western forehand. It's just a killer. It's really what the guys, the good tennis players, now use. You get a lot of topspin; you can really come from low to high and really hit through it with a very flat racket.

But if you can get him real low on his backhand, he's not as strong. High on the forehand or low on the backhand. But he basically blocks and--but if you give him anything about shoulder high on the left side, it's like an overhead. He just goes [whow], and it just comes back--his shots are very flat, very close to the net, and very straight. He doesn't hit much topspin, he's just kind of very flat. He blocks, and he's an excellent athlete. I mean, he really can see well.

I don't know how old Mike was when I first knew him, but he was definitely in his fifties, okay. If he didn't win or take second or something in the Cal golf tournament with all the faculty and coaches and everybody, he just--you'd go to Orinda Country Club or something and you'd hear, "Oh, Mike won again," or "Mike was second," or "He shot a 69 at Orinda," I mean just really a good player.

I played with him at Miwuk Village. "Well, okay, we'll play Miwuk." Okay. The first hole's like a 259 [yards] par four, right? It's not quite short enough to be a par three. And he just hits this thing straight down the middle on the green, putts a putt, he's got an eagle on the first hole. Next he hits just on the fringe, chips up, sinks it, bird. Next one, does the same thing. He goes eagle, bird, bird, the first three holes. And two of those three holes have woods on the right side, and my shots go off in the woods. So I'm

about seventeen, nine, eleven, or something, right, and he's eight after three holes, right?

And that's when you realize he doesn't really hit the ball really far. Up there, the altitude, he says the altitude really helps. It's worth thirty, forty yards. But he is just kind of a low, straight-down-the-middle golfer. He just controls, and he doesn't waste, and he goes [kunn, kunn] on the green, and he putts well, and it's just there. And if he's off the green, he chips well. He just avoids--he's just a very steady, straight player.

So that's Mike. He is efficient. That's the way he plays tennis, much the same way. He's not an elegant swing or anything, but he's just a very effective player. And I'm sure that--he doesn't joke, "Hey, nice try, got that one," he's just [pchew] hit it, hit it--

LaBerge: Serious about it.

Helmbrecht: --march off. Misses, "[grr], damn." And that's just the way he is. He's always competing against you, against himself, against the course, whatever. Has some standard that is too high to even meet probably.

Mike's Efficiency

LaBerge: Do you think that carries over in his work life?

Helmbrecht: Yes, I think so. I don't think it bothers him, like right now, he's, "Okay, I've got to be in Ventura tomorrow, I'm in the car and I'm gone." Someone else would say, "Well, it's a long drive, and it's foggy." Not Mike. Mike needs to be there tomorrow, or tonight at 9:00, he'll get there if he can get there. He would work in his office until a certain time, and then he just drove to the Lair. He'd come in for forty-five minutes or an hour sometimes, and then drive all the way back.

LaBerge: Just for a meeting or to check things out?

Helmbrecht: Yes, he was on a lot of things. Somebody should have told you that he was a Tuolumne County deputy sheriff. He has his own badge--

LaBerge: Oh, I didn't know that.

Helmbrecht: The Sardellas, who are the people that run the pack station, Miller Sardella was the sheriff. His daughter Laverne runs the thing, Laverne Literall. Her husband Jack was also sheriff of Tuolomne County. So her father and her husband both were--so he's connected with those people. He has gone on search and rescue up in the high mountains. Somebody should tell you about that, I don't know--

LaBerge: Why don't you tell me?

Helmbrecht: Well, I just know he's done that, okay? And either Laverne Literall--I'm just trying to think whether Emery would know about that.

LaBerge: Emery Curtice?

Helmbrecht: Emery Curtice. But I know he has gone on search and rescue in the high mountains with Miller Sardella, I just know there's stories of Miller taking the--"We want the best horse," and they jump over these little canyons, searching for things. And he has done that. He's good on a horse.

LaBerge: So he was deputy sheriff during the summer only?

Helmbrecht: Right. I think he's just--it's kind of like an honorary, but he's physically got a badge, like if somebody comes into the Lair anytime and says, "Well, who the hell are you?" he's got a badge. He pulls out that badge, and I'm sure that he knows--at that time Elbert Miller was the local deputy that had the car and drove around, and he has connections to all those people.

He was always on the Permitees Board, which raises--

LaBerge: I knew--

Helmbrecht: --also, okay. So he would come in for meetings, but sometimes it was just he had to see something, or did it get here or something. And I think a lot of times, the phone call would do, but I think he'd say, "Well, I'd better be there. I'd better go check on that, make sure Noel's doing it or make sure Wayne Crow's doing it," or whatever, or did that get done. It's just, "I haven't been there for a week and a half, I'd better get there." He'd want that presence continually there, and he was. There's no question. I mean, the UC LAIR license plate, the Lair is Mike.

Business Aspect of the Lair ##

- Helmbrecht: He's, you know, he's a person that I would certainly trust to hold a million dollar bill, and all that sort of thing. There's no question of his integrity. I mean, everybody has their own little value system. He stays very true to his own value system. And it's a good one, I think.
- LaBerge: Well, I got the impression from talking to him when he was talking about the business side of the Lair, that he went over all the bills as they came in, and the way he did it is the reason the Lair is a money-making--
- Helmbrecht: Yes. When I came, they still had the Tahoe Alumni Center, and the whole operation was losing money. Mainly because of trying to keep Tahoe open year-round, and the spring and fall were just killers. They could get a few people to come up in the summer, and a lot of people came up during skiing time, but they couldn't sell booze and all that kind of stuff. So when it was sold and it became a hotel, The Four Seasons, that was successful. You can make a real resort out of it, booze and fancy food and charge a lot for each room.
- But it was not meant to be that. It was meant to be a place where alumni could go use it for conferences, and Cal departments can go and do this. And it just wasn't done enough. There always had to be cooks, and there always had to be janitorial services year-round. Well, the Lair was kind of--you pile everybody in and you pile them out and let nature take its course for the rest of the time.
- So the Lair was always successful, but the Lair made very little money even then. Like Tahoe may lose like \$70,000 and the Lair makes \$50,000, and they lose \$20,000 on the whole thing. And that's obviously in a different time, but I know that it first made over \$100,000 when I was there, and that was unbelievable, to make--and half of that was Camp Gold, right? I think we got like \$180,000 before I left.
- With Ray now, it makes over \$600,000 a year. Now, partly you're paying for that, and it's something that the associations had to have. But it still is something that--it now is a very positive force in the Alumni Association. The Lair provides funds for other alumni programs, other than just itself. It is now just part of the budget; it's counted on.

Manager of Camp Gold

LaBerge: What was it like to be manager, and how did you get that job?

Helmbrecht: Well, about three or four weeks before the end of summer in 1970, Mike came up and we were just sitting at lunch. They were cleaning the tables, and he goes, "Well--" I think Bob [Mason] was going to head for veterinary school, and his marriage had broken up, and he just said, "Bob won't be back next summer, and I assume that you're interested in being the manager."

I said, "Yes, I am." [laughs] So that was just done. The start of the next year was funny when we discussed salary. I think I'd started \$450 and stayed at \$450 a month, I think, because that was still a high for the Lair, and I could deal with that. My house payments were \$130 or something; it was nice having those house payments on \$23,000 houses at that time.

He just asked me, he said, "How does \$600 a month sound?" And I said, "Doesn't Johnny make \$625?" Head cook. He said, "Yes." I said, "Then I want \$635. He works for me." He said, "Done." That's just the way Mike was. "I understand that." I was thinking six, but I hadn't thought of the other. Either he'd say yes or he'd say, "No, no, no, no!" It was kind of settled. He makes his mind up fairly quickly.

He said, "Fine," and like I say, he was always very fair with me. My wife was the first wife to be paid.

LaBerge: Oh, really?

Helmbrecht: No one's wife ever was paid before. She did--

LaBerge: Did you negotiate that?

Helmbrecht: No, no. He just said, "She does this, and she does that, and I just think that--" and I think she ended up getting like a director's salary or something. She certainly earned it, because she always went to Sonora every Monday and did that run, mostly just to get out of the camp and go do things. It's hard for me to realize that someone can run the camp without a spouse. There's a lot of things that are important, and Joyce was into a lot of the staff things, and not into other things. There was always a large group of staffers that really admired her and talked with her, and a lot of my rough

edges were smoothed out by them being able to say something to her, and it gets back to me.

I was always really blessed with really super assistant directors. Now, the wife generally is the kind of assistant director, but I think at the time, we ran it that way and I still think it was important to have a senior staffer, or two, to become your assistants, so you really get staff feelings back. We always encouraged them, and I had them disagree with me, and generally when they disagreed with me they were right. It was something I hadn't realized, or you see it from a different angle, or somewhere the truth is in between both of us probably, and at least you're able to bring it up and head problems off before they happen.

Equal Pay for Women Staffers

Helmbrecht: Let me talk about equal pay at the same time, maybe. I'm trying to think, it was about '72 or '73. I know at the time the maintenance crew was making \$110 and the dining hall girls made \$85. I really don't know what Kub Korral girls made; my feeling is probably that they made the same, \$85.

The girls were a little bit ticked, just because they realized that there's nobody that works harder than the dining hall girl. They literally do work the hardest, and the staff knows that. They have to get up early, they're there three meals every day, you're on your feet. If you've ever served dining hall, which I've done at Singles Camp for a week, by about Tuesday your legs are gone on that cement. And you have to continue--I don't know how you do it third week, eighth week, ninth week, they're still saying, "Okay, yes, I'll get you some more bread. Yes, I'll get some ice water." You know, it's just the same stuff, the same menu, I don't know how they stay up. They do. So it's a tremendously difficult job.

It's about fourth week, third or fourth week. I know we'd already gotten one check. That's kind of when it came to a head again, and it just--they discussed it mainly among themselves, and it came up at a staff meeting. They said, "We just don't think it's fair, and we're going to talk to Mike." The maintenance crew said, "We'll all take \$100. We think \$100 for all of us is fair. We'll take a pay cut so that they--" they'll get a little more, and there's more gals than guys.

There were no gals on the maintenance crew then. There were no guys in the dining hall. Or, we had one in the Kub Korral but not by that time. It was just, those are lady jobs, and those are men jobs. And that's just the way it had always been. That's the way Mike ran it, not on purpose, but that's the way society was at that time. Ladies served food, men cleaned the toilets, okay.

Lin Van Heuit Robbins was the first maintenance girl.

LaBerge: Oh, really? I know her.

Helmbrecht: Okay. So she's Grubby Girl, first one. She had a show written about it and everything. Instead of Funny Girl, Grubby Girl. And anytime we ever put a gal in any job, they were always wonderful. Nancy Miller [Katz]--lots of other people. Now it's half and half in most of those jobs, okay, as it should be.

LaBerge: So how did you get this through?

Helmbrecht: So they said, "I think Mike is coming up Tuesday, and we want to meet with him." So Bobby Tuck was the assistant director and program director at the time, and Jonny Smith was also--it's his cousin, who was a little bit older; he was about thirty. He said, "We want to meet with him, and we'll bring the head of Kub Korral, head of dining hall, but we just want to meet and this has just got to change."

So I called Mike on Monday and I said, "Saturday night we talked about this, this morning they said they want to meet with you tomorrow." "Fine," he said, "I'll be up there about 1:00. How about we meet at 1:30?" I said, "Is the cocktail area by our tent there--" "That sounds good." Okay.

So it was just kind of--he was there, and I think I went over after lunch and waited for him, he drove in, and I said, "They really feel strongly about this, Mike. You know, I don't know but that some will leave. I'll lose eight, ten staffers on this, good chance." And he said, "Oh, we'll talk about it."

So these grim-faced staffers come across. I mean, for them to even face Mike, it took a long time for them to get where they would face Mike, because he has this kind of scary image at the time. I mean, he was the king boss; even though they're working for me, everybody was really working for him.

They came over and sat down. Bobby said, "Mike, we just don't think it's fair that women crew people make so much less than men crew people. We think it's fair if nothing else that all of us, we'll take a pay cut. The maintenance crew says they'll take a pay cut." Bobby was already making a lot more than them. But, "the maintenance crew will take a pay cut, and we think \$100 is fair."

Mike goes, "No, they should all make \$110." So it was just done, and they got their little back pay the next check, and it was just--I mean, it was like no argument. And he knew it was time. And like I say, going through the sixties or entering the seventies, with all these problems that were happening on campus, it was time for it to happen.

It's the same thing: we always had male pool directors. And my first two male pool directors were terrible. I had one guy would turn his back to the pool and play his guitar. I came out one day, I said, "If I ever see you doing this again, your guitar will be in pieces, I tell you. You may have me in jail, but don't you ever--you're in a position where somebody could drown out there." It was always because you had to deal with the chemicals, and it's like--

LaBerge: Oh, only a man can do that--?

Helmbrecht: It's like women can't run a marathon, right? In the Olympics, I think 800 [meters] was longest women could run, right? All these sorts of things. And chemicals, and all these things; "a woman's got to be able to--" all this maintenance, and drag the hoses and all this stuff.

Well, Debbie Saunders Pugh, Debbie Pugh--I don't know if you know Debbie Pugh--

LaBerge: I don't know her.

Helmbrecht: But Debbie Pugh was a good friend of Betsy's and so forth, and I said, "Well, Debbie has her WSI, she's taught lessons, she's as tough--a lot tougher than these last two guys I've had. If she has to have help, I'll help her." I mean, I knew the maintenance crew would, too, but I said, "I don't think she needs to be helped. She's probably stronger than half the maintenance crew anyway, maybe all of them." Heck of a shortstop, just a good athlete.

And probably--I would guess that at least 75 percent of the pool directors in both camps have always been women since then. I think the women do a much better job. That's not

fair to some guys, because there's been some very good male lifeguards, and now there are two at each camp and all that sort of thing. At that time, we had one lifeguard at each camp, was what we had.

And so a lot of those things just kind of happen, and Mike didn't say anything to that. I think it helped that it was Debbie, that it's not a ninety-three-pounder that I'm trying to get to do this job. But we had a lot of good ones, and it just goes right by him. "Okay, fine, yeah, it's time to do that. And that's your job, to set your staff for the next spring," and he always backed me up well.

Hiring Staff

LaBerge: Are you the one who hired the staff when you were manager? How did that happen?

Helmbrecht: Well, no, he did. He interviewed--there were generally some other people that sometimes narrowed it down a little bit, but he did all the final hiring. Not always to the pleasure of the people who had interviewed early, because I think Mike perhaps might have been a little more political. There would be someone who didn't have quite as high a score, but he knows that that person has been a camper for a long time, and most of the time he was right. Some of my best staffers have come off the alternates list, and they're almost always people who have not--they're either kind of nerd types, brain types, right, and they don't come across as outgoing as some sorority president or fraternity president. Maybe the Bowles Hall engineer type--I can think of one; even Betsy Carleton and Dilys Walker is now a doctor. Brian Seck, one of the Seck children--

LaBerge: Oh, I knew Peter, but I didn't know Brian.

Helmbrecht: Okay, Brian's the older brother. Those are people that would never have gotten on the staff if someone had not said, "I want that person on my staff." Or they just impressed someone, or we got really hurting for a dining hall girl right at the end, and you called four people and this person said, "Yeah, I'll be there," and you find out that they're an alternate, and they're wonderful. And partly because they feel fortunate in being there or something, some great staffers have been alternates.

LaBerge: So were the alternates people that Mike put on the alternate list?

Helmbrecht: Yes. They were just--he would have--like right now, I'll be helping with some interviews, but there will be 100 people for about twenty-five positions. Now, you don't want to tell all the seventy-five, "Oh, yeah, and if there's a job, we'll call you," but perhaps another twenty. And you say in a normal year we'd hire these people. Right now, it's unbelievable the people we put on the alternates list. At that time, it wasn't--I mean, when you get paid \$100 a month, even in those days that was not much money. But at least it paid your fees, tuition, which it doesn't do any more.

But you could always find a job that paid a lot more than a Lair job, and you probably still can, but when you put board and room and everything in, it's not as bad a job as it used to be. They get paid about \$500 now, whereas like I say, even ten, fifteen years ago, \$200 was the maximum probably.

But where we were--

LaBerge: I was wondering, how did you hire the female pool directors?

Helmbrecht: Basically, you--the returning staffers were my responsibility, where I want--and all those people, we had interviews at the end of camp, and "I would really like to--I want to work with children next year, I would rather work with the preteens, but if I can't work with the preteens, I would rather be in the Kub Korral, but please don't put me back in that dining hall." Or we would have someone that says, "Man, that's where I want to be, that's what I love." Susan Seck, Peter's older sister, never got out of the dining hall. I mean, she was--if she went back today, she would be the hostess. Or if that job wasn't there, she will serve tables. That's her domain.

And Cathy Wiley Boer at Camp Blue was the same way, never got out of the dining hall. The Colonel and Der Fuhrer; that's their nicknames, because they were in charge of those dining halls for a long time.

So you would take these people and have to put them in the job. The problem comes when two excellent people both want to be teen director, and there's only one job. Now there's two teen positions, but at that time there was only one, and by picking one you would often lose the other staffer. They don't want to come back in the store, they don't want to come back on maintenance. "I've been maintenance two years, and I've been pot washer for a year and

maintenance for a year," and you just have to--you make that choice. We've lost good people that way.

Program director is obviously that way. It's a very important job. I don't think it's the most important job as most people think, but it's a very, very important job. So when you choose that person, sometimes you have to encourage people to--you'll say, "I think you'd really be good with teens." "Oh, I never even thought of myself that way."

And you generally say that when nobody has expressed any interest. But you still, even sometimes someone will express interest and you realize that someone else would be better, especially preteens, eights and nines and so forth. We've had some wonderful people, maintenance crew guys or dining hall people, that kids just kind of come around and just end up holding hands.

And Bob Albo, young Bob Albo, Dan Boken who's now a doctor in Omaha, were that way. They would walk from the store to the volleyball court, and there would be ten kids around them. And if some other staffer walked right in front of them or right behind them, and they said--but they kind of magnetized, little Pied Pipers for kids and so forth. They liked kids, and it's obvious, and the kids obviously liked them, and so that's where you want them, with those kids.

A lot of times, people just don't want to go back into that same old job, and that's when it's hard, because you have to choose. Sometimes you say, "I really don't think that I have a person for that job. Look for--find me an art director, because these people just want to have their own program, they just don't want to be back in dining hall, and I want someone who has some talent, or meets people better than this person who wants that job." So hopefully, Mike looked for that. And hopefully we find somebody.

Or maybe it's a Camp Blue staffer comes across. They have two people, and you find out that they have two people that want to be art director, and I get the second choice basically, but there's a talented person that switches camps. Once in a while you get a switch of camps, but very seldom. Most people don't want to do that. Just like campers.

So basically, the director kind of has that prerogative--. I mean, he's been around them for twelve weeks, thirteen weeks, and you get to know them very well in those close situations. And like I say, the hardest thing is not being able to satisfy someone who really wants a job

badly. And sometimes you put people in jobs that they're not particularly good at; I've often rearranged the staff second or third week. And generally, it's not rearranged by me, it's rearranged by them. They say, "I hate this. I hate this cooking hamburgers. I would rather be back on maintenance crew." They say, "Well, the maintenance crew isn't really what I thought it was going to be either," and they come to me and they say, "He would just as soon do this, and I would just as soon--" I say, "Fine, let's do it. You realize now that you're not a director any more, your pay will go down twenty-five dollars--" "Who cares? I would just rather wash toilets than have to go over there and talk to those people all the time. I thought I would love it, but I don't." And you're better off being in the position you are. So some of that shuffling happens occasionally, but that's just what you--by walking around and realizing what's happening, people griping about a person. A camper will say, "Why do you have that grouchy nature director?"

LaBerge: You mean, you walking around and hearing campers saying things.

Helmbrecht: Yes, campers talking to you and stuff. And slowly, you get to know your campers. I mean, every week there's at least half that you know, and sometimes they're famous people, but most of the time, when I was there, they weren't. They were just the person that always comes back to tent 48 or something, and you get to know them, and they'll tell you little things. "Bathrooms don't seem quite as clean this year." Things, and they're not really griping.

So then you check a little closer, and have the maintenance crew do an extra head run that day or something, and you realize it's one crew, not the other, that the one crew is better than the other, and probably they're washing dishes better too. That sort of thing. So you kind of start watching those three guys a little differently, talking to them a little bit, and it squares away. They realize, they know what they're doing most of the time.

LaBerge: So would your staff meetings--

Helmbrecht: We always had staff meetings every Friday night after the show. They have been done other times. Sometimes they have been done before the show. Sometimes they're done Saturday morning, as they no longer give you lunch. We always had hot dogs and donuts for lunch.

LaBerge: Right, or a bag lunch. We had a bag lunch a couple of years, anyway.

Helmbrecht: But lunch is not part of it any more, so it's kind of a time to wash the tennis courts, and with no lunch, the campers are more likely to leave at ten, ten-thirty or something, they're gone. And then there's no reason coming early, because there's no lunch either. We have our campers--

LaBerge: They give you kind of a breather.

Helmbrecht: We'd have campers always show up and campers that stay, and so you end up with serving probably 100, 150 people, and we would make 150 bag lunches. We were told by a lot of people that most of the time, by the time we get to Oakdale, the kid doesn't want a Lair lunch. We're at McDonald's anyway, and the Lair lunch gets tossed. So with half of them being tossed or something, we figured--I think it's not a bad idea, it just--it was kind of hot dogs and beans and donuts we had for years. I would drive Saturday morning to Twain Harte, pick up the donuts and bring them back. That was just one of my jobs on Saturday morning. So different things happen.

Joyce Helmbrecht's Job

LaBerge: Well, what about Joyce's job? You said she went to Sonora. What did she do in Sonora?

Helmbrecht: Every Monday, we would make up our list, and there was the Sonora run. Now I think it's done by probably the office person at Blue. But at that time generally it was the two wives, or Joyce and the office person, and the Camp Blue wife would watch the office while the others went. And they would leave after breakfast, and come chugging back in at 3:30 or 4:00 and give everybody their masking tape and more pencils and nails and--they would go to Hale's & Symon's and Mundorf's and Fye's, which is the--prescriptions for the doctor, you have to go pick up medicine for the doctor, prescriptions for people. Take our money into the bank, was one of the main things. They went to the Bank of America in Sonora, so they took the bags of money out of the safe, and those were deposited at that time, and all the checks and things you had gotten on Saturday as people bought things and so forth.

So there were a lot of different little things that they were--just kind of was the run. The kitchen realized that we

forgot to order ketchup and we're out of ketchup, so you've got to go down to Mother Lode Wholesale and get a case of ketchup, or something. So they would have this kind of path that they would go around Sonora, and eat lunch at Mount Ridge Sandwiches or someplace, and then get back up the hill. It was good. Joyce always enjoyed it. She liked just doing it, and then it got to where she knew those people pretty well. You had all your P.O.s and stuff, Lair P.O.s, write them out, give them a copy, and at different times I've done the job too, when Joyce wasn't feeling well or something like that.

But most times, it just was they'd go around to all the directors, "Do you need anything, do you need anything?" Basically. And "Yeah, okay," and they'd come back, and they'd just pass out the felt-tip pens and all this kind of stuff. More white T-shirts for the art director. Just stuff like that.

LaBerge: Well, what other responsibilities did she have?

Helmbrecht: None. She would sub when someone was sick, mainly in the dining hall. My wife doesn't get up in the morning. There, she would get up at 9:00. And generally, the staff would bring her breakfast. She would sit in the meadow, and John Van Heuit, Lin's younger brother, Chris Kevorkian, Lynne Koll, Loretta Koll, people like that would just kind of know that she liked cantaloupe and a cup of coffee or something, and they would sit and talk.

But I know, many times she will sit in--they will put their chairs in the sun, like the snake getting warmed up. But she was very much a part of the staff. We lived right in the staff, there was a tent right behind us. It was always guys that lived in that tent, so you would find information about a lot of things. The bathroom was right there next to our tent, right, and so forth, so a lot of--there's no secrets at the Lair. That's one of the sayings, there's no secrets at the Lair, and there really aren't, especially in the staff area.

LaBerge: Loretta and Lynne both mentioned how fond they are of Joyce, and how much she was an alternate parent for them when--

Helmbrecht: Yes, she is, she is. I think if something had happened, it wouldn't surprise me that Mike or Jane had made some provisions that we may have had those wonderful girls, if something tragic had happened for them, because they don't have a lot of relatives, Mike or Jane. I know Joyce thinks an awful lot of them too. They're wonderful girls. And when we

first came, they were like nine and eleven I think, when we first came. With Jeepers and Mehidabel, we had Mehidabel's baby cat at our house for twenty-two years also. So that's their--Jeepers is the dog and Mehidabel is the black cat. And Mudgie. In fact, Mudgie's name is MM--it's Mike and Jane--it's Lynne, Loretta, Mike and Jane, LLMJ is her name. LaMudge. [laughs]

LaBerge: That's right. I think the girls were trying to tell me--they were giving me all these nicknames.

Helmbrecht: Right. LLMJ, Lynne, Loretta, Mike and Jane. LaMudge was her name, so she was Mudgie, right, but it comes from being the Koll cat.

LaBerge: They told me a few other things, like the TL, and the alternate honey, and the AH--all of those kinds of--

Helmbrecht: All those things mean things, yes, that's right. There's a bunch of language. There's treb for breast, and they may not have said all those things--

LaBerge: Yes, they did tell me about treb, too.

Helmbrecht: Yep, treb tag and different things. Yes, there's a lot of little different things that are said. Betsy's car, she had a pink Pinto that's called the treb. We're hopefully going to bury it under second base sometime when Ray doesn't know that we're going to do it. [laughter] It may become a Lair legend; it no longer really runs, but we may just tow it up there--

LaBerge: Now whose car was this?

Helmbrecht: Betsy Jo Carleton. There's a lot of them. Sophie's another famous car, that's an old Ford convertible that Kemper Stone has filled full of dirt with flowers growing in it now in Vallejo. But that was always in our parades, and Sophie was--you know, Fourth of July parade, wave and so forth, some guy with his wig on and stuff, you know. His beard or something. Fourth of July parade. A lot of different things happened that go--.

Anecdotes

LaBerge: Well, do you have some anecdotes that you want to talk about, because we don't have a whole lot of time.

Helmbrecht: Okay. Let me just--one--I think it was either 1971 or '72; '72 sounds right to me. I should have looked to see when we had Doug Worley. But it was a time when a lot of the staff was very different than Noel. Noel is very competitive also, and we always play the campers on Thursday. We had some guys, some of which were pretty good softball players, and a couple of guys were terrible. Some guys were upset that they never got to start the game and so on.

And they just came like third week or fourth week and said--to me, and I wasn't athletic director; I think Ronnie Miller was. But they said, "We don't ever get to play except when you have to have us, so we're not gonna play."

LaBerge: And this was the staff was saying this?

Helmbrecht: Yes. And we have--so we end up with like either seven or eight guys to play the campers. And Mike drives into camp, drives through the ball game to his tent, and he gets out of his car and I say, "Hey Mike, get your glove, we need you in center field," not realizing whether he would play or not. It took about two minutes, he's in his tennis whites, pulls on his tennis shorts, right, puts on his tennis shoes, his old white cap, and [tschew] out he comes, this old left-handed glove. He's left-handed, right. His old left-handed glove. And I think we batted, he didn't get to bat, and he goes right out to center field.

And I think it's Rupe [Rupert] Ricksen; it's either Rupe Ricksen or Bob Albo. I almost swear it's Rupe Ricksen who knows Mike well and is a heck of an athlete, unbelievable, was an all-coast basketball player, and he and his brother were like super-NCAA type champion or second doubles team and so forth, and is now a lawyer in Piedmont.

He cracked a ball--we had modified fast pitch, and so you couldn't windmill, but you could throw as hard as you could underhand. I was getting pretty quick by then, but it was right down the middle, and he just got all of it, dead center. You go past what now is a flagpole out there in center field, there's a big giant tree across the road and he hit it right at the base of that tree, across the road in dead center field, longest I've ever seen anybody hit one to center field.

Okay, we had a defensive end that hit one maybe 150 feet into that left field, almost seemed like it was going to go into the campground and across the whole meadow. He really crunched it.

And as soon as it goes, flies over, that's a home run. I mean, so we just generally go, "Home run, home run." Mike has no idea what our rules are currently, and he takes off, and runs right through the buck brush and--you've seen the spears on buck brush?

LaBerge: Yes.

Helmbrecht: Runs back there, gets the ball just past the base of the tree, comes, just swings around, turns around left handed without being warmed up, and throws about a 300-foot strike towards second base, and the player catches it, and just turns around and looks, because Rupe has just been trotting around the bases, right?

LaBerge: Thinking it was a home run.

Helmbrecht: He is, it is. He always got his home run. But Mike doesn't know that, right? And so Mike's going, "What the heck's going on...Throw him out!" It's like, "No, it's already a home run," and he comes out, and he's got little things, little blood marks on his legs where he's run through that buck brush. It just--there's no question that he would do that, run up the wall and ram his head, just do it, because that's how competitive he is.

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Helmbrecht: And that's just the way he was.

I went fishing with him and Jane. He and Jane are good horse people, I'm not--so I got this old big lug of a horse named Schultz from the Sardellas, and we went back, I guess to Lily Creek or the Clavey River or someplace. I don't fish very well, but I just said, "Well, I'd like to go with you." Okay.

So we went. I think Jane caught more fish that day, but they both caught an awful lot of fish. You have to sort them out, and you have to eat some there, and all that kind of stuff, so you can just bring out as many as you can, right. You only limit so many, but they catch and release, and catch and catch and catch, and they really are good fishermen, and they're really fun to be with. I remember I fell in, trying

to cross on a log, the bark went on me and stuff, and I think I caught--got bites, too, and never caught any. And I know they each caught at least forty or fifty fish.

I can remember him cooking steaks, and he eats his like almost red-raw, and he could not believe--I would say, "Put mine on, Mike." "Well, we're not going to eat for--" "Put mine on, would you Mike?" "God, you're going to burn it." "That's the way I want it, I want it cooked through, Mike." "Oh, God, it will just be leather!" And his was just blood-red, and he's eating that thing. So he always would gripe at me about cooking that poor thing.

Mike's Redwood Tree

Helmbrecht: Here's a good story: has anybody talked about the redwood tree?

LaBerge: No.

Helmbrecht: Okay. My tent faces this way and his faces out, and there's a redwood tree just back from the ball diamond, okay. This is Peter and Donna's [Sawyer] tent now, so it's in their front yard. In fact, you can't really walk between their tent and the tree any more, and you almost can't walk--there's a little kind of fence in front, and you can't really walk, because this tree has gotten really big. So whenever the forestry guys would come over--and we'd always have them over for lunch sometime, the head ranger and a couple people that come through--we'd have them over for lunch, and then we'd go back to his area and we'd talk about it and he'd say, "Oh, I had a problem, I was a forester at Cal," and so forth. "Could you tell me about this tree?" He'd always walk them over to this tree.

They'll look, and "God, how amazing." "Well, I wasn't a biologist, you know, I was kind of fish and game, you know, and I was in big animals." They kind of scratched their head, and they have no idea what this tree is, right? Or sometimes one of them will just say, "Isn't that some kind of redwood?" Mike said, "I didn't think they had redwoods around here." Well, he's brought that tree and planted it, right?

LaBerge: I see.

Helmbrecht: So there's--I don't know if it's a dawn redwood or what kind, but some kind of redwood tree, and now it's probably, I don't know, thirty feet tall, it's this nice, beautiful tree. Does not belong in the Stanislaus National Forest, right, but it's there. That's just typical of Mike to do something like that, right, and I know, because I've seen him do it five times at least with the rangers and stuff. And sometimes if one of them will know, and he'll just give--the new guy is, "God, I don't know, doesn't have needles--" because almost everything's a pine or a cedar up there. There's some black oaks, but there's nothing like that at all. If some guy's been at Trinity or some place, Eureka or some place, he knows right away that this tree doesn't belong here.

But he planted that tree--I don't know, it has to be--before I went there, it was probably about ten feet tall when I first went to the Lair in '69, and now it's this big, beautiful tree. So it's one of Mike's legacies to the Lair.

When you walk from the bridge that we drive across, by the big tree, and come up there by the pool, you see those little rocks? There's rocks around by the pool, and it's just become grass. Mike started that. Mike one day just kind of--it started fairly small. Different staffers have moved it out, planted a few more things, but that was one of his little projects that he just--and I can't think when he did it. I think he did it one of these Order of the Lair Working Bear times. He just kind of--I think he bought some flowers, like some petunias and different things, but he just wanted to start reclaiming some of these areas that are always walked through. And just by putting the rocks around and planting things in there, it's kind of recovered.

There have been different efforts. It's one of the things that we've got some people on Lair Staff Alumni Club that--in fact, John Van Heuit is very interested in reforesting a lot of the Lair. He just says there's no reason for everybody to walk everywhere. It's just like Mike's redwood tree, if you start something now, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years from now, there's some nice other trees that have grown up different places, and maybe views are changed or made nicer and some of the--because that's basically it. The whole Camp Gold used to be a swamp, basically, that whole--and it was a small lake at one time. It had people that went there in like 1910, it was a shallow lake, and that's how it eventually becomes a kind of a wetlands, and eventually a meadow that you can walk in everywhere.

And you cut things, and as you trample along things, plants die and so-- . So we have some people who are very much for doing some of that, and we hope to get some of that by Ray, and either they will donate the trees or we'll all go up there at different times and plant, and try to maybe rope off some areas that are reasonable to everybody.

I know the area around the hydrant, the new hydrant, was at one time--John has planted all that, and most of those trees died because it takes about two or three years of care most of the time to really--once a tree gets really established, they go, but if they don't get established, it's hard for the little seedlings to grow, especially when somebody just walks through a different place where they shouldn't. And if you put a few barriers that aren't too ridiculous looking, and John would just as soon do twine with red ribbons on it or something, which I wouldn't let him do. But we try to--the rocks on the ground or something sometimes help to do some of that, and they don't look bad.

Handling Problem Situations

LaBerge: Any problems, either in operations or with staff or--

Helmbrecht: I had a time when Mike--I was wrong. I took a camper and stuck him up against a wall.

LaBerge: When you did?

Helmbrecht: I did. I mean, it had to do with kids. It had to do with-- the guy walked in, and I'm sitting at the middle table, and right in front of the dining hall, he comes in and he puts his finger in my nose. A person I knew. He said, "Your kid hit my kid," or "hit my kid with a stick--" I have no idea. "And if he does it again, I'm gonna knock his block off."

And if he had said, "If he does it again, I'm gonna knock your block off," I think I'd have been okay. When he said, "If he does it again, I'm gonna knock his block off," I just turned around and drug him outside and stuck him up against the wall, and he was about 140 pounds and about 5'6". I got him up against the wall, and I said [to myself], "You shouldn't have done that, Noel." [laughter]

And the guy washing dishes is right behind me, I don't know whether it's Lynnise or Susan Seck, someone, I got a dining

hall girl, "Just put him down, Noel, just put him down."
 [laughter] And so I said something to him, I said, "Don't
 ever, don't ever threaten my kids," or something, and turned
 him down and let him walk away.

And it had to be Lynne. Lynne had to be somewhere
 involved. She had to be hostess. And Mike and Jane were in
 camp.

I just stood up there, I was shaking. You know, the
 adrenalin gets going, you go, [grrrrrr], that was dumb, okay.

Mike comes around the corner of the building, and he just
 said, "You okay now?" [laughs] I go, "Yeah. I shouldn't
 have done that." He goes, "Yeah, you shouldn't, but could you
 tell me about it?" I told him about it. He said, "Well, the
 guy's wrong. The guy's wrong, and you're wrong for what you
 did. But I don't care if he sends a letter or whatever,
 you're my manager, and I back you. I just have to do that,
 okay? And I may tell you you're wrong, whatever, but anybody
 says--as manager, this is your camp. And if that ever happens
 again, you tell him, you say, 'Pack your things and leave.
 Now. And if you're here in two hours, the sheriff will take
 you out of here. You can no longer stay in this camp.' And I
 will back you on that. That's the authority you have. You
 are running this camp."

And so that was the only incident like that I ever had.

LaBerge: I see!

Helmbrecht: I never had to ask anybody to leave. Actually, I did once,
 but that was a different situation, it was a person who was
 very unhappy with her tent, and finally we said, "Well, I
 don't think you're going to be happy. I think you should
 leave." I didn't say the sheriff will come take you away;
 they were just very unhappy, and I said, "You should leave."
 But it wasn't the same situation, and we stayed very calm with
 a very abusive person.

But it was just typical of--I think Mike might react
 almost the same way as I did. I think he would, if somebody
 had said something about Loretta or Lynne, it's [khhhh], it
 just comes, because that's--you're competitive, whatever. So
 it's just something that was there.

The "Rocky" Party

Helmbrecht: Another quick anecdote: in 1976, we had a Rocky party, final party. Final party is really a big deal, especially when my wife was there. If you ever ask Lynne and Loretta, they'll know how much work went into those parties. That's part of why Joyce finally said, "I think we're about where we should leave." The boys were fifteen and sixteen, we needed to do something other than this for summer. "But mainly, I'm out of ideas. I can only do this so many times."

Every staffer has pictures cut out of magazines, or mainly they come from magazines, sometimes posters or things, of things that look somewhat like them, or are a situation that fits something that happened during the summer. Sometimes involves a day off, when oh, the car broke down. So you'll get something, the Joads going, Grapes of Wrath, here's this car, and underneath you'll put, "Willie and Sue and Linnette, Kennedy Meadows," or something like this.

But they're very pointed, and some are pretty much a lot of "in" stories. You try to have staffers tell on other staffers, and get this information out. Your assistant directors do some of these, and about you, and the other camp does something about you and you do something about the other camp.

But you end up with a whole wall of these pictures, nudes and compromising positions. And it's just meant for the staff, right, and we understand each other most of the time pretty well. But it's just, you know, people with big moustaches, and dumb things, freaks and beer ads and whatever. Marlboro Man or something, right? And they fit different things, and you make all these captions, and it's just very difficult.

Well, '76 to most people who were there during that time, it certainly was the neatest party we ever had. We had a ring set up in the middle of the Teen Lodge, we'd built a room on the back which is the first time we'd done that, and Kemper Stone had made sides of beef out of canvas stuffed with newspaper and painted, so we had these sides of beef for people to hit and stuff.

The party came in, and that year, our captions on all these--they were really wonderful. Everything just kind of came together. I don't know whether it was--it was an excellent summer, both staffs, Blue and Gold, got along really

well. It was just a very good year. I'm sure campers loved us, an awful lot of all-time all-stars were in camp in kind of their best jobs; it was one of your better maintenance crew chiefs and one of the best teen directors you ever saw, and the cooks were good, and it was just a really good summer.

It was a summer that Mike and Jane were up very little, for some reason. It may have been Mike was at one time the head of all the camps for the whole nation, something like the Alumni Association camp director thing or something, so he was gone a lot. I know that Michigan, a lot of places have camps.

And I don't know exactly why, but I think he was gone a lot that summer. And I don't know that he knew us very well. We always give awards. They're a lot less negative than they were at that time. At that time, we had a lot of "laziest" and "biggest complainer," and "biggest eater." Obviously, the biggest eater for the guys is not a big deal, but for the gals--

LaBerge: Oh, that was a big deal.

Helmbrecht: You can--quite often. And unfortunately, some years the biggest eater is also the biggest complainer and the laziest, right? If it's the same person, you end up generally with a person in tears, which is not always good. So at different times, we modified the awards, and sometimes you'd give them to people who don't deserve them--the skinniest person gets the biggest eater award, because you know they can take it better.

But most of the time, we go by what the staff votes. We all vote on them. They're not my awards, they're their awards. And most valuable, and hardest worker, and show biz, and most athletic, and all these sorts of things which are good awards. And we gave out all these awards with a mike that comes out of the ceiling, right, like ring announcer, and I would do it like--I don't know if it was Geoff or not; might have been Geoff Smith. But we would do an award and Blue would do an award. Sometimes we'd have more awards.

But we got through the awards, and at the end, we said, "Now, we want everyone to rise for the Lair national anthem." And Mike and Jane are in a corner back here [moves away from microphone], and I'm up in this--up there--and so everybody stands up, right? And they kind of stand up, and it just "When you're down on your luck, and you ain't got a buck, in London--" and that's the Lair national anthem, okay? Today,

that staff would sing London Homesick Blues, right?
 Armadillo.

And Mike and Jane were waiting for, "Oh, say can you see," or something, and there's like eighty-five of us singing with one voice, all half-stewed--I mean, we're not drunk--and he's cut off the champagne at the appropriate time--he was always the arbiter of when you cut off the champagne. There was always plenty of champagne, right, but at some point the noise gets to a certain level and he said, "That's it, no more champagne," he kind of put it away, stuck it in his car and locked it up.

Well, this night, I think his daughter was one, but there was a table down below of gals, Camp Gold gals, it was the "pig" table it ended up being called later, but they'd already taken like two cases and stuck them under the table. Just keep pulling these bottles--and so everybody was probably feeling better than usual.

But in one voice we're singing this, and I just know that they said, "Who are these people?" [laughing] I mean, we've hired them, who is this big guy with the short hair, what have we done? You heard something, and I think we just kind of sang a little bit, and I turned and they were gone. It's like one verse, somehow they were--and it was just--and then just pushed the table back and danced till three and all this sort of thing. You know, it's our big last, final party, and by then everybody's crying and [unhhh], never be together again, you won't be back next year, so--but it's a good time.

And that was one I just couldn't imagine--I just know they said, "Who are these people?" I mean, there's two of us, and we served the meal. I mean, Mike and Jane, Noel and Joyce, and I think it was Geoff and Bonnie. I don't know--but we are the six people that serve everybody, and we've made all the food. Joyce's twice-baked potatoes and this and that, mushrooms and this. The actual cooks cook the steaks, but other than that, we always had steak, but the shrimp--we sit around at night and devein shrimp. We had tons of shrimp and good sauce with it, and it's just a really good meal and a good time. But you can just see them going, "Oh, man," because I think that they knew us less than usual.

Probably they stayed away more because Lynne was there.

LaBerge: Oh, she was dining hall hostess.

Helmbrecht: She was dining hall hostess. And I think that was--that probably was why. They said, "Let her have her own summer," or whatever.

Staff Competence and Contentment

Helmbrecht: We always, whether Lynne or Loretta were on your staff or not, you always say at staff meeting, "Mike will be up tomorrow, be sure your areas are really squared away, he's gonna be around." I mean the camp was run differently when Mike was going to be there. I know we'd say, "Hey, Mike's here tonight, well, let's have the birthday party tomorrow night," knowing that we're going to keep most of the staff up, but we don't want to be keeping him up on a Sunday night. He'll leave tomorrow, and so we'll have the birthday party on Monday night or whatever.

So things are always a little tighter when he's in camp, but [laughing] it got everything really cleaned up and so forth when Mike was coming, too. And you'd say, "Well, why don't you do it?" Well, you kind of--as a director, you're trying to keep everybody happy, and the campers happy and so forth. I know there are years when the food isn't quite as good, or the service there isn't quite as good, but sometimes you don't realize it, "Boy, are we barely making it through this kitchen." But if we don't have these guys, there's no food to send out. It may not be good food, but there's at least food, right? And we've got to keep these guys getting up, right, and check on them and get them there and get up yourself to make sure they got up at times, right? And "Aw, I gotta fire them? I don't know whether I'm gonna fire them or not."

Charlie Peck, who sang "London Homesick Blues," started one year, he started as pot washer, and in three days was a salad man, and in about two weeks he was third cook, and by the end of summer he was second cook. And he had zero experience. He learned to cook in that kitchen, and later became head cook and did a wonderful job.

LaBerge: Is this because you needed him to do this?

Helmbrecht: Well, Charlie, "Yeah, I can do that, I can chop salad, okay. I'd just as soon do that as wash these dirty pots," and so you call the employment agency and they send you somebody else. And they'll send you some space cadet who doesn't know where

he is, and then you gotta, "Can you send me somebody else?" But we've got to keep this guy [laughs]. Guy's mother came, couldn't find him. We couldn't find the guy. She went back home. Three days later, he wandered back into camp. Where he'd been, we had no idea. We said, "Stay in your tent." Called his mother, come get him.

So you used some locals in the kitchen at that time. But there's a lot of different things have happened, but--.

LaBerge: Did you ever have to fire anyone?

Helmbrecht: Oh, yes. We fired a few. We fired a guy, wouldn't take his dog. You can't have a pet. "Well, Noel, you have a pet. You have a cat." That's a cat, okay? Doesn't leave these piles of things for people. And he was a big German shepherd. As soon as it's there, we can't have everybody with a dog coming. "No, I gotta have my dog." "Well, then you're fired." You can't have the dog.

But not many. Most of the time, you can make a switch. My style, I tried not to berate the whole world. I hate this person who says, "Hey, we gotta--you night guys are leaving the kitchen dirty, we're gonna lock everything up." Find out who's making it dirty, and jump on their case! I mean, they deserve it. The other people who are dealing with it--and it's hard. Sometimes you have to--there are some threats you make at times, but most of the time I think you're better off if somebody's drinking too much, talk to that person. Don't gripe to the whole staff. Most of the staff, it's not germane to them, and I think to me, it's a better way of sometimes doing things than griping at the whole bunch for--you know, "We all gotta stay here until the stolen item is back on the teacher's table." Sometimes it's the only thing you can do, but most of the times it's kind of nice to figure out who did it.

Quail, we've eaten quail with Mike. I mean, a pan of quail, it's got to be sixty or seventy or eighty quail. Quail aren't that big just--there are about three bites, and he and Emery would get them.

LaBerge: Would get them, at the rice ranch or something?

Helmbrecht: You know he's hunted bears and elk and deer and moose, and everything, and he's just the ultimate sportsman. I mean, he can dry fly fish and put that fly right where he wants it, and catch anything. He really is good. And Jane fishes just

about as well, and he taught her I'm sure. And sometimes, I'm sure she fishes better.

Mike's Fairness

Helmbrecht: One of the key things with Mike and me I think is--I really feel he's always been fair. Any time we've disagreed or something, he's either, if he really disagreed with you, he'll kind of tell you "No," and either tell you why, or you discuss it and you realize that, "Okay, we've agreed to disagree, and he's the boss." I've never felt, say, cheated or anything by him. It's not that he's taking advantage of you ever. He always seems fair, in pay, lots of other little different things.

I can remember clashing with him over the price of penny candy. Because at one point, everything had to be marked up so much at the store, right? And so we said, "Mike, you can't charge two cents for penny candy." I mean, kids can't afford it. Think of Mark, right? He's got one penny. He's only got one nickel, and he wants two Jolly Ranchers and a bubble gum or something, and he knows that "I can get this much with that nickel," you can't do that. You can charge an adult an extra dollar on a shirt.

So we finally reached that accommodation, that we would go 40 percent on these things, and keep--and even if we lost money on bubble gum or came out even, because they don't get the things for the same prices, either. By the time the drug man comes all the way to the mountain, that little tube of toothpaste costs four times what it costs at Long's Drugs or something. And it seems like a ripoff, but we pay--I often would say, "Why don't we just go down to Long's and buy this stuff?" "Well, I guess we could, but we'll probably forget it." We've got the list, we just check it off the list and the guy brings it. We pay more wholesale than anybody pays retail, especially on any sale, or Costco or something like that. But you don't want big tubes either. You want one little tiny tube because you forgot your toothpaste. You want a week's worth. You want one toothbrush, and if it costs you \$2.50 for the toothbrush, well, I know I can get them a dozen for \$10 or something, but I--.

LaBerge: So does the manager have something to do with the finances or not?

Helmbrecht: No, not really. I mean, you make sure that the store person checks out, and that their sales slips meet the cash register receipts and so forth.

LaBerge: How about the banking? Are you the one who filled out the deposit slips and--

Helmbrecht: My wife always did, so I did--she used to work at a bank. I'm sure that possibly Camp Blue was done that way. Though the office, the Lair office, is at Camp Blue, the official--there's a separate building for a Lair office. Everybody has the store, everybody has their lodge, but there's a Lair office, so quite often the Blue officeperson would do more of those things for the Blue director, because it's just there and just as easy to do, where we had to fill out our own reports and stuff. But Joyce just always did that.

And it's kind of where we are. I mean, it may not be the most interesting--I just always appreciated the man, or at least most times. I think to most staffers--he wasn't always the most popular person, because you kind of dreaded him being around.

LaBerge: But also--I mean, Loretta and Lynne were talking about how it was to be the boss' daughter, but what they both said was, everybody said to them, he's fair.

Helmbrecht: And you've heard it from me, too. They had to take--I'm sure they heard a lot of gripes, and they were super at not ever being the snitch. I mean, they were very careful not to be. And not say, "Dad, did you know [neh neh neh neh]--"

LaBerge: I guess that was a rule.

Helmbrecht: Neither one are that way, and I got the feeling that he or Jane told them that. I mean, "This is your summer. It's not going to be easy in some ways, because there's no taking away the K-o-l-l after your name. But you've earned the right to be here, you're not just here because you're my daughter," and that's certainly true. They both brought tremendous talents to the staff. Lynnie didn't get to be the star in the Friday night show and sing when she's not a really very good singer if she couldn't pull it off, and she pulled it off very well. Loretta the same thing. Loretta eventually, super art director and a fabulous cook, probably the best food that we've ever had.

Innovations in the Dining Hall

LaBerge: I think I was there when she was the cook.

Helmbrecht: Well, she and David [Smith]--they weren't married yet then, and the mistake was to get married, I guess. But now David's happy, and she appears to be happy, too. But they did wonderful, wonderful food. My son worked in that kitchen; that was probably one of the unhappiest kitchens that ever was at the Lair at the same time, because Loretta is such a perfectionist. It was just not a nice place to work, and she expected everybody else to be there fifteen hours a day like she was. And so it got very tiresome.

Lair kitchens get their efficiency in certain ways. Her way was not a very efficient way. But things had to be done very well, and they were. A lot of innovations happened. She's going to have parsley on those plates when they go out, and so forth, and so somebody has to chop--

LaBerge: The parsley.

Helmbrecht: You know, forty-five plates worth of stuff. And we will have fresh fruit salad, not just this stuff out of the can. And it takes four hours to chop--I know how much it takes Singles Week. They spent all morning every day preparing fruit salad. And then you still don't have your greens. Green salad is quick, usually. But fruit salad just takes a lot of time, pick all those grapes off and cut up all that cantaloupe, and whatever, pineapples, and all the different things, and that's what she would do. "That's the way I want it; I want healthy and fresh." That's when yogurt, and the breakfast thing, coming in early and get the breakfast bar, and still was nicer then than it is now, but it's still--you can come in early and just have cold cereal--those are big deals.

LaBerge: They are big deals.

Helmbrecht: One of the biggest deals that I, probably in the long run, possibly Noel will be known for, was the day that Charlie and Bob were out there, and Charlie doesn't like ribs. And they were cooking ribs. The Lair always had ribs one week, and chicken the next week, and ribs one week, and chicken the next week. And it was all ribs, and there were two half-chickens being cooked there.

I said, "Charlie, does it take a lot longer to cook the chicken or the ribs?" "No, it takes about the same amount of

time." "Could you cook half ribs and half chicken?" "Sure."
 "Well, next week, let's do that." From 1948 to whatever, 1975
 or whatever it was, the Lair people would come and say, "Are
 we having ribs tomorrow or are we having chicken tomorrow?"
 "We're having chicken." "Oh, good, I love the chicken."
 Okay. "Oh, darn, I want the ribs. Chicken, I can always have
 chicken any time. I like those ribs."

LaBerge: So your innovation--

Helmbrecht: So from that time on, every week you can have one or the other
 or both. Okay? Isn't that wonderful? I mean, it makes you a
 genius. [laughs]

LaBerge: Those little things do make a difference at the Lair.

Helmbrecht: And you wonder, how many times--Mike White looked at that,
 Mike Koll looked at that for years, all these different
 directors. Bob Mason and Terry Cole and all these dining hall
 people, and all these cooks, and it was just set--Mike set it
 up that way first, and that's the way we just did it.

LaBerge: Any other changes like that?

Helmbrecht: We always, always had roast beef on Friday, turkey on
 Saturday, but no longer. Since Ray has come--

LaBerge: It's turkey on Fridays.

Helmbrecht: It's the same way Blue does it, see, and we were always the
 opposite of Blue. Staffers, if you liked roast beef, you
 could go have roast beef Friday night at our place and
 Saturday night over there; if you liked turkey, you could have
 it two nights in a row by just going to the other camp and
 eating with the other staff. Some people did.

But with Ray, both kitchens run very much, everything is
 exactly the same. They run under the same menu. We never had
 the same menus with them. We sat--our cooks made up their
 menus with Mike, and you tried to figure out, make sure they
 cost the same, but we might have sweet and sour pork on Monday
 night and they're having spaghetti, or whatever.

At that time we kind of felt that if there were some
 things you thought you could cook good, you better cook those
 things, right? [laughs] If all you can make is macaroni and
 cheese but it's good macaroni and cheese, put it out there.
 But--

Lair's Impact on the Alumni Association

LaBerge: The clock is ticking, so let me just ask you a couple of general questions. What do you think the Lair's impact is on the Alumni Association?

Helmbrecht: Well, I think it's much more important than--now, obviously the money that it brings in is very important, but that's a real--

##

Helmbrecht: --a place where alums get back together. I know of very large groups of people that meet from Seattle, Washington, New Jersey, southern California, old fraternity brothers and the wives have to come along. Old sorority sisters and the husbands have to come along. Old team members that come together, and people that knew each other in college--it's usually men or the women, but sometimes they were two fraternity boys married sorority sisters, and they'd come back together and they all knew each other, different times.

I think an awful lot of people bring their children to be exposed to these wonderful staffers, and I think it's one of the best selling things that Cal does. Whenever you physically take current students and have them around families, I think that--obviously, Cal was the best when we were there, right? I mean, that was the golden age, was '56 to '60, for me. It was some other time for someone else. And when we see these current students, we go, "Hey, they're not so bad. I mean, their hair's a little long. They're whatever, this and that, sexual mores are different than they were in my time or whatever, but these are really--they represent my University well."

And in my case, my son went to Berkeley. The one who didn't go to college didn't, but the one who decided to go to a four-year college did. And I think they have a tremendous influence that way, that a lot of students are--say, if I want to go to Berkeley, they ask--"Well, you better; boy, it's getting harder to get in all the time, and there's a lot of pressure."

And I think a lot of ten and eleven and fifteen-year-olds work harder at school and so forth to come to Cal and perhaps be a Lair staffer. That's what's hard about these interviews; you have these kids and they want to come on the staff, and they end up on the alternate list or something. Some never

make it on the staff. Some do, but some don't. But a lot of them came to Cal so they could be a staffer.

And we try to talk to them at that time: "It doesn't mean you're a bad person if we don't select you. Come back next year. Maybe we don't need your talents this year as much. Maybe there's some junior that's so slick that we have to put them on the staff, and next year you'll be a little more mature. Go out and do some things, get involved. You'll have more things to talk about next year, and so forth."

And sometimes--I had a person that never got on the staff that said, "Well, I've interviewed three times and never got on the staff, but you know, I really became--I'm still really glad I went to Cal, because I got involved with this and this and this and this, and I regret that I never got to go to the Lair, but Cal was still the right place for me." And a lot of them, "My friends got on the staff, and so I went and visited them," or something like this, or "I still went up with my folks when I was twenty-one and a junior or senior at Cal," this sort of thing.

But that interface, I think, of staff and campers, the camper with camper and the campers with the staff, is what it's really all about, I think. I don't know--the setting is conducive to it, because of the--I don't know, pseudo-Spartan living. I mean, it's not Spartan living.

LaBerge: No.

Helmbrecht: But it certainly is--you're not backpacking, but you're certainly not at Palm Springs, either. You're kind of Motel 6-ing it, camping or something, right, whatever. But you're kind of forced to be there, you're around your friends' children, and that whole thing. If we can ever get you to bring your six- or seven-year-old up, you're going to have to keep coming until they're at least fifteen, and maybe longer than that, but we'll catch you for ten years, and whether you want to come or not, your kids will make you come. [laughs]

LaBerge: That's right.

Helmbrecht: Because they love it. That week is wonderful, and they want to make sure that--"Oh, no, such-and-such isn't back again," but it takes them about a day and their new preteen director or something is wonderful, and they don't miss Debbie any more or whoever.

LaBerge: Well, are you on the camp committee?

Helmbrecht: I'm on the camp committee. That's the meeting I'm going to now. That's probably one of the main reasons I was on the council: you continually try to pick a person or two that has some sort of a Lair background so that--because most of the councillors don't. Council, that's the old term--most of the directors were not campers. They don't, so you end up out of thirty directors, maybe only five or six have been either campers or staffers, and so you need people to keep looking out for the Lair. And otherwise it becomes kind of a cash cow rather than an alumni program, and I think it--

LaBerge: With its spirit.

Helmbrecht: Yes. It needs to be both. I've had people complain about the Cal spirit, "God, it's awful rah-rah." Well, it is. There's no question it is. And today's younger alums feel it more than we do. When we go up to Big Game, there's a substantial number of people in the library during Big Game, or in The Bancroft Library, or something that, "Oh, is something happening today?" You know? They're very focused on becoming a doctor or electrical engineer or something, and that's what they've come to Cal for.

But even though that's true, and maybe someday they're going to donate the new engineering building, most of those people I don't think become as involved when they get out of Cal. It's certainly not completely a blanket statement, but I think that the people that are at the stadium and at the basketball game later tonight and so forth are more likely to be very active.

They're also probably the most negative people about Cal, because when the team doesn't win, they're upset, because they feel it. And I think the Lair is just another one of those things that kind of keeps you thinking about Berkeley and Cal.

But the good summers, the best summers are when the staff does the best job for the campers. I can just tell. When we had excellent shows, and it's not always because you had the most talent. But if you had the most enthusiastic people and they learned their lines and they did the show well, it was well written and it was well performed, and the food was reasonable but it was served with a smile, and the bathrooms were clean, and the kids liked their directors, you liked the campers and they liked you, it just seems like we got along with each other better, you get along with the campers better, and it just was the summers you remember.

And then when you have people that are not quite doing too good a job, and the campers--

LaBerge: And not caring.

Helmbrecht: And she comes ten minutes late, and you have to talk to her all the time, and you don't want to fire her or whatever, and slowly she gets the picture, but it never quite gets together as much. And those same staffers are the ones who we don't see. They kind of come for one year, two years, and they're gone. And their life is someplace else.

And the ones that stay three, four, my Mark six years, the Lynne and Loretas and Betsy Carletons and so forth, you get this great bond with each other and with their friends, and that's their lifelong friends--more than their fraternities and sororities, more than the people they graduated with. Those are important, too, but the Lair staff family is really strong.

And there's a lot of bonding with--I did with the doctor and some old-time campers, and just certain people always do certain things. Certain campers always play cribbage with the maintenance crew at head two, and have a beer on the way through your job, right? And you don't know whether you should have a beer with a camper or not; well, with those guys, you should. Just have one; just have one. You don't have to be a souse. It takes a little longer to do head run that way, but wasn't it nice to be able to do that. And they just do that. And there are certain weeks, they look forward to maintenance, "Oh, yeah, is he here? Yeah, okay, well, we'll play cribbage up there." At tent forty-five and forty-six on the triangular table. [laughs]

LaBerge: Well, we should probably end, but I can tell--you definitely have the Lair spirit yourself.

Helmbrecht: Yes, it was important, and I have the same feelings about some of my girls' basketball teams in Bret Harte High School, but my friends are my Lair staffers. My closest friends are either--like the Flinns who were Lair staffers and kind of got me involved with this, and they stay involved with a lot of those same people. Some of these same--like the Betsy Carletons that took care of their kids at different times for a week while they went to Hawaii or something, so Doug and Ceci were babysat by a lot of these people that you know you can trust and that you think a lot of, and they think a lot of you, too. It's important, my connections.

LaBerge: I'm going to turn this off; thank you very much.

Transcribed by: Shannon Page and Rita Bashaw
Final Typed by: Marta Sykes and Shannon Page

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ANECDOTES GATHERED FROM LAIR CAMPERS AND STAFF

Sue Harbach Johnson:

Mike was born alert, efficient, and ready to go, and that's how I saw him in the many years I have known him. This is why Mike was needed at the Lair of the Bear (one camp in those days) and at the UC Berkeley Alumni Office.

Mike worked hard to bring the Lair season together each summer; with his chosen staff, starting with the early crew who perspired greatly under a deadline, tents, et al were set up, camp opened, campers stood in line to get in and loved their time, and the summer ended each year with raves. As a "man in charge," Mike may have growled at those around him (he did!) occasionally, but as the then visiting Alumni President (Ed Harbach) said, "Mike gets the job done!"

My years at the Lair were '53, '54, and '55. We worked hard. Mike ran a tight ship and some of us were a bit intimidated but carried out our assignments and had fun, too. We would never have let him down! Mike recognized every bit of talent his staffers had to make the camp run smoothly.

Now about his competitive spirit: it was always ready and usually more than anyone's. Friday afternoon baseball games were one evidence of this. Mike would rout the best players from the campers to play the staff. No male staffer was permitted to be dormant during those hot and dusty afternoons. And the staff usually won! Mike's eyes twinkled and that quiet smile was noticeable. It all went back to Mike's college days when he had been a great ball player for Cal, so there was much to learn from his quick eye, mind, and ability in sports as well.

A gesture of kindness I remember well was the weekly event before campers left: it was Mike's time to recognize the hired kitchen staff, and especially "ol' Joe" for his diligent efforts to feed us all. The scene was the Sunday Barbecue at the dining room. Everything stopped when Mike praised Joe! Joe, all in white with his chef's hat on, stood next to the barbecue pit with a long fork in his hand, and would smile the widest, whitest grin ever seen. A little recognition went a long way. Oh, how the campers and staff clapped, too! The dust from the roof fell to meet the dust rising from the floor.

None of us could forget those barbecued ribs and chickens cooked on large bed springs! Wonder where they went to rust in winter after camp closed? But every year saw new springs--and Mike always remembered to comment. (It was more than duty.)

Without Mike what would the Alumni Office and the Lair have been? Not nearly so successful, I'm sure. Jane Koll was an integral part of Mike's life (few knew how important!) and was greatly admired by all (then and now)!

Thank you, Mike, for all those years I knew you best, and for your consistency, and your patience with us, the staffers. We learned, we performed, and even grumbled a bit ourselves! (We were "Bear" oriented, of course, and young.)

Hats off to YOU!

January 1993

Susan Seck Holmes:

What a wonderful project! Certainly both Rick and I have very deep roots in the Lair, and Mike Koll is at least indirectly responsible for our meeting. My mother first went to the Lair in 1951 to visit her then college roommate, Cherry Maybeck Nittler, who was on the staff. She was impressed, and several years later convinced my father to try it. I still remember the first Lair vacation when I was five years old. The rest I guess is history. My mother sometimes bemoans the fact that we could not stand a summer without the Lair. She even took us for short visits sometimes when my father could not get away. I think she was relieved when my brother, Peter, finished his stint on the staff, so that she could go somewhere else for a vacation. There have been four Seck siblings to work at the Lair; I have a fifteen-year-old sister, so it may not be over yet. Rick and I met at the Lair, as did my sister Nancy and her husband Todd. My brother Brian met his wife Bonnie through his best friend and fellow Lair staffer, Bob Zeller. I have not even mentioned the Holmes family. . .

May 4, 1992

Loretta Tuck Monaco:

One of my earliest vivid recollections about the Lair, surprisingly, is not the beautiful trees, meadows, wildflowers or other things of nature. As a child of eight or so, the thing I remember most was the little building which housed the chemical toilet. I remember holding my nose, doing what had to be done as rapidly as possible, and then fleeing with the utmost haste to the otherwise wonderful pine-scented air of the Lair. This experience was not limited to the children of the camp, as my recollection of camper night skits and also staff shows would indicate that the Lair heads figured as a prominent theme--a tradition that continues to this day. Mercifully, a modern restroom facility was installed after the first year (or was it two?). This, however, put an

end to another unique experience of the first year, which was brushing teeth at a little line of sinks out in the open forest, shivering in the cold morning air, or under the stars after campfire.

We really roughed it that first year or so. The pool had no filter or heater, so it was emptied every Saturday and refilled with clear, cold, mountain water. Taking part in the races on Sunday was an act of bravery bolstered by the possible reward of a tootsie roll prize. We admired the dedication of the staffers who took part in the water show. Excursions to the lake in Pinecrest were much more popular than is the case today, as the water there was quite a bit warmer than the Lair pool, although by Friday, if the week had been warm, the temperature approached a comfortable level.

The deck around the pool was constructed of wooden planks with spaces between large enough to permit coins to fall through. One could crawl underneath and find a "fortune" to spend at the Lair store--at one point called Koll's Cave Canteen. I spent a lot of time sitting outside the Lair store, watching the staffer water down the dust around the building in preparation for "it" to open. To this day, the smell of wet pine needles on a hot day brings a flood of most vivid Lair memories.

Some of the wonders of childhood: fishing in the stocked trout pond (a guaranteed catch), building dams in the creek, catching polliwogs and frogs, picking up obsidian chips left long ago by forgotten tribes of Miwok Indians who also enjoyed summer vacations at camp, were experiences that today are environmentally incorrect. However, in that day, we did not have all of the programs now available to Lair camper children. We made lanyards in the Kub Korral, had Kiddie Kampfire (beginning a lifelong interest in singing), and a supper hike. The rest of the time we were independent--still a wonderful aspect of Lair life for young ones.

So many memories come flooding back as I think about the past: the year the ladybug swarm invaded camp and there were ladybugs everywhere (one of the staffers put a can full in my Dad's bed as retaliation for winning the softball game and we had ladybugs in everything we owned); camper-staff volleyball and softball games (although ladies didn't play in those days); entering too many tournaments so I had to spend all day Friday--but not during the game--trying to finish; bingo night; adult campfires, where we learned something new, or heard about how the Bears were going to get to the Rosebowl this year; hotly contested tennis matches; chatting with friends by the pool, or in the head; taking a nap in the afternoon; how good it felt to be clean (despite the intricacies of Lair showering). The many years all blend into one another and despite gradual changes, the Lair stays the same. How does one explain the Lair? One can't, because the Lair experience is the people and friendships and experience of family in a beautiful spot God has made available for a time. May it continue to be Lair.

MIKE KOLL RETIRES
(A Version of "Casey at the Bat")

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two with one inning more to play.
And so when Cooney died at first, and Burrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go, leaving there the rest
With that hope which springs eternal within the human breast,
For they thought if only Casey could but get a whack at that--
They'd put up even money with Casey at the bat.

You know the rest of that famed poem and what it's all about--
How mighty Casey took three swings and shamefully struck out,
But do you know the sequel 'bout a player just as bold
And of the three great swings he took all for the Blue and Gold.

That story starts right here, you see, right where we stand today,
'round fifty years ago it was, Mike Koll came out to play,
A country boy with a baseball glove and not much more than that,
Just another skinny kid who loved a ball and bat.

But it wasn't long until he was the team's left-handed ace,
Striking fear into the heart of every batter he'd face;
Big C won, he wore with pride the famous zebra sweater;
Team leader, too--when pressure came he made each guy play better.

Cootey Thompson pitched quite well for the Stanford team those years,
But the thought of Koll upon the mound reduces him to tears,
For each time out between these guys the ending was the same--
In twelve straight starts 'gainst Stanford, Mike never lost a game.

Now I'm too young to ever have seen Mike stand on the mound
But with a little digging it's amazing what I've found;
From several Bobs, Ray and Jay, Cookie too,
Several others weren't too shy to share a tale or two.

Why, now we know sometimes he'd never hit the ball all game,
That his "Strike three" made Casey's swing seem weak and even tame,
And then we have his fast ball (today's lingo calls it "heat"),
Catcher Hoberg wasn't exactly knocked right off his feet.

The old hidden ball trick is a stunt of backyard fame
 Though no one really does it in an honest-to-goodness game,
 Except against St. Mary's, or so they sometimes say,
 And guess who was the mastermind of that sleazy trick that day?

But surely Mike's best hour occurred at Sunken Diamond one day
 When he took one on the bean to stop a Stanford double play,
 And as he lay at second base and wished he were in bed,
 The whole darn crowd yelled out to him, "That's how to use your head!"

Now jokes aside, we must admit he had one fine career;
 This guy he just refused to lose or show a bit of fear;
 When No. 12 retired and pitched his final Stanford game,
 One and all knew baseball here would never be the same.

'twas wartime soon and Mike was off to do some Navy time
 (I'd quip about his uniform but I can't make that rhyme);
 To Corpus Christi Mike was sent to shape up soft draftees
 (made days at Parris Island seem like fancy ladies' teas).

But all the while his love for Cal was smoldering away,
 And when Berkeley had a place for him 'twas clear what he would say;
 At Alumni House he hung his hat; again he was a Bear--
 His second swing for Berkeley was creation of the LAIR.

A temporary home at Shasta--not bad but not quite it--
 And then he found Pinecrest, Cal's future summer hit,
 Paradise right here on earth for old Blues and little tykes,
 A place to do most anything (just leave home pets and bikes)

But let's be frank, for once again there is a lighter side--
 We know some things that our Mike Koll would surely like to hide;
 Back forty years they must have known throughout Alumni House,
 He built the Lair for just one thing--to find himself a spouse.

The dining hall he quickly filled with campus beauty queens,
 Pushing carts (sometimes in rain) to serve up pork and beans,
 And then one night there was Mike out behind a rock,
 Putting every move he knew on cute Jane Biedenbach.

But I digress, let's go back first and study this new camp,
 With tents that leaked and rickety stage and the kitchen up a ramp.
 Dining hall gals who giggled as they brought out salad or soup,
 Each pretending that she knew whether she was serving John or Rupe.

As sparse as some things might have been, our fate was surely sealed;
 The Lair was sure to have at once a first-class baseball field,
 Where staff and Campers met each Friday for a little fun,
 So what if Campers always lost by scores like thirty to one?

But back to Jane--you know, of course, she did become his wife,
 And for five years friends all wondered if Mike knew the facts of life.
 But '56 resolved their fears, for Lynne was born that year,
 And just a few years later Loretta did appear.

And let's be frank and tell the truth; we all know Mike Koll's rep--
 A tough competing guy who makes you watch your every step;
 For years his voice would make Lair staffers freeze and stammer or stutter,
 But somehow Jane, Loretta, and Lynne could melt the guy like butter.

Ah, but where we all got back was playing him in sport--
 What joy a game of doubles on a Camp Gold tennis court;
 6-0 6-0 Mike loses, how easy it does seem--
 Then we wake up and we realize the whole thing was a dream.

Meanwhile the Tucks kept having kids to staff the whole darn Lair,
 Except for a few jocks Mike scraped up to add in here and there,
 Like basketballers sent by Art (or Pete) or oarsmen on the crew,
 Or football guys like White and Morton (naming just a few).

Harriet Blue wrote songs for shows and gut buckets were big hits;
 Buzz, Mark, and Bobby made us laugh, as did Randy and Von Schmidt;
 Things just kept getting better at Mike's forest filled with pine,
 A second home, especially for kids like yours and mine.

For over thirty years Mike gave his all to make our Lair so grand,
 He did it mostly all himself; sort of like a one-man band.
 Yet all things end, and once again it was time for a final season,
 For Mike was needed at bigger things, our Alumni Council would reason.

That third big swing for Mike was truly something to behold,
 A clear, unwavering show of love all for the Blue and Gold;
 For five years Mike has seemed to be everywhere at once,
 As San Diego crew races followed Sacramento lunch.

Leading a staff the size of his is all most folks would try,
 But that was just a start for Mike, whose limit seemed the sky--
 Chancellor's committees, trips abroad, and a constant PR shtick,
 And all the while he's right-hand man to Bill or Claude or Dick.

Now add to that vice presidents and new counselors every year,
 Each of them in line to get a word in Mike Koll's ear.
 To do all that and still in all treat it like it's fun,
 We all must say, without a doubt, it's never been better done.

Well, it's been great to come today and give dear Mike a roast
 (if you need me for tomorrow I'll be hiding down the coast),
 My analogy to Casey's bat missed by quite a bit,
 For Mike's three swings have surely been an overwhelming hit.

There may be no joy in Mudville but I know 'bout things right here,
I think it's time to fill 'er up and have another beer
and drink a toast to Mike with me as I stand here perspiring,
For I have this funny feeling that . . .
 a legend is retiring.

Dave Flinn
June 3, 1988

LAIR OF THE BEAR MANAGERS

CAMP GOLD

Mike Koll
Bob Albo
Gordie Ragan
Terry Cole
Bob Mason
Noel Helmbrecht
Jim Stewart
Debbie Stoney
Ray Bosch
Peter Sawyer and Donna Jones
Chris Stanley

CAMP BLUE

Art Gallon
Bernie Simpson
Rick Cronk
Wayne Crow
Geoff Smith
Jim Rogers
Bobby Tuck
Betsy Carleton
Ray Thornton
Bob Miller
Will Thurlow
Chris Stanley
Mark Appel
David Smith

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John R. Glascock 1875-76; 1884-85	Forrest A. Plant 1977-79
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Warren Gregory 1919-22	
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Maynard J. Toll 1950-52	
John P. Symes 1952-54	
Edwin Harbach 1954-56	
O. Cort Majors 1956-58	
Mortimer Smith 1958-60	
James W. Archer 1960-62	
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Stripp, Fred S., Jr. ('32), "University Debate Coach, Berkeley Civic Leader, and Pastor", 1990.

Heilbron, Louis ('27), Attorney, in process.

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